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EDUCATION AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SWEDEN AND DENMARK

Sweden

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CARNEGIE COUNCIL ON POLICY STUDIES
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EDUCATION AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES
SWEDEN AND DENMARK

by Gösta Rehn and K. Helveg Petersen

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Education and Youth Employment in Contemporary Societies

A Series of Special Studies

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with a chapter by
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by Gösta Rehn

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Foreword

This is the last of seven publications presenting studies commissioned by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education as a means of providing a global perspective for education and youth employment in contemporary societies. These publications are concerned with education and youth employment in Japan, by Hidetoshi Kato; Mexico and South Asia, by Alberto Hernández Medina and Carlos Muñoz Izquierdo and Manzoor Ahmed, respectively; Poland, by Barbara Liberska; Great Britain, by Stuart Maclure; the Federal Republic of Germany by Klaus von Dohnanyi; Belgium, by Henri Janne; and, in this volume, Sweden and Denmark, by Gösta Rehn and K. Helveg Petersen, respectively. Margaret S. Gordon, associate director of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, is the general editor of the series. To the authors of these studies, and to Gösta Rehn and K. Helveg Petersen, whose work appears in this volume, we express our deep appreciation.

The German Marshall Fund generously provided support for two international conferences on education and youth employment, which were attended by several of the authors of studies for this series and which have contributed significantly to the Council's deliberations on this subject. The International Council for Educational Development, under the direction of James A. Perkins, arranged for the participation of the essayists in this project. We acknowledge these contributions with profound thanks.

CLARK KERR
Chairman,
Carnegie Council on Policy Studies
in Higher Education

Part One

Sweden

by Gösta Rehn

Introduction, Part One

This volume should be regarded as a compilation of basic information, which concerns, on the one hand, youths themselves, what they do and what they think or believe and, on the other hand, what society is doing in order to influence their lives, through labor market policies to provide satisfactory youth employment and through an enlarged and reformed educational system.

I have also attempted to analyze this information and formulate probabilities and desirabilities for the future. Being neither a sociologist nor an educator, I have confined myself to summaries of the debates over these matters in Sweden. My own basic value system is that of a middle-of-the-road Social-Democrat. It should, however, be understood that, even if verbal clashes between proponents of different ideologies have been violent in matters like education, youth delinquency, and employment policy, the real divergencies (at least those that have enough backing to determine actual policy) are usually rather limited compared to those that exist in most other countries.

For practical reasons, references to sources and judgments presented in this volume are limited to material available in English. Statistical figures are largely taken from the regular statistical publications of the Central Bureau of Statistics (in Sweden known as SCB), the Labor Market Board (AMS), and the National Board of Education (SÖ). In addition, for Chapter 1, I have used published and unpublished material produced

by the State Youth Council (Statens Ungdomsråd), the Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ), the Swedish Institute for Opinion Research (SIFO), and sociologists and criminologists of the universities of Stockholm and Gothenburg. For Chapters 2 and 3, I have used reports from the Employment Policy Commission, the Expert Group on Labor Market Research (EFA), the Institute for Social Research (SOFI), and factfinding and debating publications issued by the organizations of workers and employers (LO, TCO, SACO, SR, SAF).

For the chapter on the educational system, I have used the Swedish government's report to the Education Committee of OECD (November 1979) and the OECD Examiners' Report. Material has also been taken from a number of studies and reports by the National Board of Universities and Colleges (UHÄ), the National Board of Education (SÖ), and the various public commissions that prepared the series of educational reforms discussed in these chapters, the respective government propositions and debates in Parliament, and the journals of teachers' organizations.

The daily and periodical press at large has been a source of information about more or less divergent views indicated in all the chapters. Most of this volume was written on the basis of material available in November 1979. On some points I have tried to update to mid-1980. Inconsistencies may have resulted.

Early drafts of several sections were produced by my assistants, Richard Noonan of the Institute for International Pedagogics at Stockholm University and Lennart Erixon of SOFI. My finalization has, however, involved considerable revision and enlargement because of the changing programs in labor market policy and access to new material analyzing the experiences of the university reform of 1977 and of earlier school reforms, new rules for compulsory school work, etc. Thereby I have received help in the form of advice and unpublished material from several officers of the public agencies and organizations mentioned above. Various parts of this volume have been read and commented upon by friends and colleagues. I have gratefully made use of advice from Torsten Husén and

Sixten Marklund (Institute for International Pedagogics), Mac Murray (Ministry of Education), Erik Nyqwist (AMS), Knut Sveri (Stockholm University Institute of Criminology), Martin Trow (Center for Studies in Higher Education, Berkeley), and Margareta Westin (SÖ). Margaret S. Gordon has been an energetic supervisor and also contributed to making my variant of the English language more readable. I also wish to thank the members of the staff of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education for their assistance.

1

Behavior and Attitudes of Youth

Young people reaching adolescence in the past few decades in Sweden are children of parents and grandparents who won a number of liberalization battles for them.

Society had taken the responsibility for maintaining a high level of employment and had largely succeeded. Trade unions protecting workers against arbitrary treatment on the job were no longer threatened by employers' attacks but were a stable and nearly all-embracing element in the societal structure. Leisure time was greatly increased by laws on holidays and hours of work. Equal rights for women had been established by law and union contracts; they were even well underway in practice, too.

A pronounced expansion of school facilities on all levels, abolishment of all tuition fees, and introduction of a general right to financial support during studies opened the way to secondary and higher education for everybody who was interested and able.

Churches no longer had much power to moralize over secularized behavior. Anticontraception laws had long been abolished, and abortion laws were gradually liberalized. There was no longer any stigma attached to premarital sex relations and children born out of wedlock. Homebuilding and childbearing were facilitated by economic support and by laws providing for

rights to leaves of absence from jobs for mothers and, recently, for fathers.

Rationing of alcohol was discontinued and other rules controlling its use were relaxed. Alcoholism and juvenile delinquency, as well as other types of deviant behavior, were regarded as human weaknesses to be healed; imprisonment and other authoritarian methods were more and more regarded as both inhumane and antiproductive, even with respect to their own purposes.

Children were not to be subject to physical punishment in the schools, and parents were advised that this should not occur at home, either. Freedom of manners was taught by popular artists and other idols.

In other words, the permissive society had arrived, and the young took it for granted. Their most important reaction was to obey their parents' advice to stay longer in school and in vocational institutions beyond compulsory school years, which also were gradually prolonged. The "educational explosion" was particularly pronounced in the 1960s.

In other respects, the increasing access to money and leisure and rising levels of education led to an intensification and proliferation of both constructive and destructive activities and attitudes among the young during and after the school years: voting in elections; working to finance their own studies; entering unions and youth organizations; supporting tax increases to promote social and cultural amenities and to reduce inequities in society; participating in sports and travel in and outside the country; taking an interest in world affairs and in protection of the environment; participating in free studies in educational organizations and libraries; engaging in free lovemaking, early family building with or without official marriage registration, restrictive birth control, or divorce; being seduced by fashion-creating commercialism in the consumption of records, fancy clothes, and other conspicuous products; reading pornographic publications and those dealing with violence; displaying undisciplined attitudes in classrooms, workplaces, subways, and other public places; drinking, drug using, and delinquent behavior.

Fortunately, the clearly destructive activities involve much smaller groups than do the constructive developments. Voluntary schooling (soon or later after the prolonged compulsory school) affects practically everybody. There has been a doubling of the membership in organizations for sports and free studies since the early 1960s; even after adjusting for double-counting, this means an increase of nearly 1 million each in a population of 8 million. The number of drug addicts, persons with serious alcohol problems, and repetitive criminals still is limited to a few percent of the population, even after the growth in recent decades.

Public opinion in Sweden, as well as that of foreign observers, tends to give more attention to spectacular deviant conduct. The appearance of vandalism and drunken behavior in the Stockholm subway has given rise to sinister generalizations about modern Sweden by reporters and TV program producers and their audiences. The fact that the number of young (as well as old) participants in study circles and other cultural activities has grown many times more than the number of young alcoholics and drug addicts is not so apparent and does not provide a basis for interesting TV programs in Sweden or abroad. Although precise figures are not available, an estimate of an increase of some 100 to 200 thousand youthful participants in free study activities, over and above the more pronounced increase in regular educational programs, in the past two decades, appears reasonable. These trends should not be overlooked in an appraisal of what has been happening to Swedish youth in recent decades.

At the same time, we must not underestimate the seriousness of destructive tendencies. No doubt those who have engaged in punishable types of behavior (though seldom punished) on some occasion in their youth are in the majority. This has probably always been true, if we may judge from the results on self-declaration surveys in various countries. It is possible, however, that a change in attitudes, associated with a decline of social controls and perhaps also of emotional and intellectual contacts between parents and children, has occurred. Indeed,

there may have been a decline in such contacts between people in general at the present stage of economic and social development in Sweden and in other highly industrialized countries.[1]

In the case of some of the observed trends, moreover, the question of whether they should be regarded as positive or negative is debatable, even allowing for the subjectivity of all value judgments. Particularly ambiguous is the restrictive family planning, which has brought the Swedish reproduction rate down to one of the lowest levels in the world. Potential immigrants from overpopulated countries may regard the resulting shortage of young labor in Sweden as an advantage, but one may also suggest that it can be seen as a sign of illness of a society if children are too often regarded as a burden rather than a joy for parents.

Another ambiguous development is the television revolution that has occurred since 1955. The experience of viewing all of the world's problems in one's living room is broadening to one's horizons, and there is no question that TV has taken over much of the educational function from the schools. Even so, passive TV viewing interferes with the acquisition of basic skills. Although both TV and radio in Sweden are provided through public broadcasting systems, without commercials, there is competition between the channels in offering light entertainment to attract a mass public audience. The effects of these types of rapid and unsorted impressions on the intellectual and emotional development of children and youth are a matter for concern, even though violence as entertainment is less frequent than, for example, in the United States. It *is* frequent but relatively mild. On the other hand, the widespread access to both TV and radio has made it possible to use these media as supplements to the educational system. Moreover, there is evidence that competition from TV has adversely affected movies and probably, also, meetings of trade union and political party locals, but not so much the study activities or the use of public libraries.

[1]These speculations about the development of modern society are, however, contradicted—particularly for Sweden—by the evidence provided by the *World Youth Survey,* sponsored by the Japanese government (1978) and the study of *Anxiety in the Nordic Countries* (Keijo, 1975).

Taking into account all of the developments discussed above can lead to different conclusions. Noting the growing participation in intellectual, physical, vocational, and citizenship activities, one may conclude that Sweden, through its young generation, is proceeding rapidly toward particularly high levels of civilization, culture, and economic efficiency. On the other hand, viewing only the rise of negative and destructive phenomena, one may conclude that Sweden, earlier regarded as the model welfare state, can now be presented as a warning example. The latter view has become popular among conservative journalists, writing in the spirit of the well-known propaganda invention of Sweden's "world championship in suicides." In reality, Sweden is about halfway between the countries with the highest and lowest suicide rates. Leftist critics, on the other hand, tend to see Sweden, and particularly its youth, as unusually susceptible to capitalist commercialism, with vulgarity and self-satisfying egotism as predominant features in a ruthlessly competitive society. Moreover, some foreign observers tend to regard the expansion of welfare-state benefits as an indication that the young, as well as the old, submit themselves to authoritarian tutelage "from the cradle to the grave," resulting in a loss of freedom and individuality in the name of egalitarianism. Others may note that precisely this system of comprehensive social insurance and access to educational services for both young people and adults, as well as homemaker services for children and the elderly, and income maintenance and health services during illness results in increased freedom for everyone in the choice of lifestyles and in patterns of work and leisure. On the basis of the results of political opinion surveys of youth, especially of university students, and on the basis of lively discussions about the "quality of life versus economic growth," various observers may find signs of leftist or rightist reactions, or both, against postindustrial society.

Weighing hard facts, as well as public opinion surveys and everyday observations, I have come to less dramatic conclusions. The predominant characteristic of contemporary Swedish youth is one of intergenerational stability in values and behavior. The

rise in rates of deviant behavior in recent decades should be viewed in the light of the fact that any increase from low levels tends to appear as rapid in relative terms. The overwhelming majority of the young people, all through the normal turbulence of growing up, accept socialization into attitudes and behavior patterns similar to those of their parents. If there is a difference between generations, it is manifested in the tendency of youth to seek greater freedom from subservience to authorities and greater personal freedom in the choice of lifestyles. Even so, active opposition to the older generation is limited to a small minority, and consistently overt rebellion (political or criminal) is only found among groups that are still limited in size.

Thus, the predominant pattern is one of pragmatic and balanced reformism, both among those who regard themselves politically as reformists and among those who consider themselves conservatives or communists. Differences of opinion as to social values do, of course, exist, but the lines of cleavage are mainly between political parties and socioeconomic groups, rather than between generations, although the young tend to inherit political allegiances from their parents to a somewhat lesser extent than formerly.

In the following discussion, I will consider some of these matters in greater detail. In doing so, we must keep in mind certain basic features of postwar development, affecting the situation of the great majority of people most of the time, whatever may have occurred in particular periods or among unlucky minorities or fringe groups. These fundamental features follow.

The high and stable level of employment that has been maintained throughout the postwar period (compared with most other industrial countries) among both young people and adults. The labor force participation rate of women has been high and has grown rapidly. The traditional gap between low unemployment rates for adults and higher rates for youth under age 20 has, however, widened, with the result that youth unemployment has become a serious problem.

The rapidly rising level of living in a mixed economy, whose parallel features of expanding free enterprise and state

interventionism, of free-market commercialism and welfare-statism, still preserve Sweden's "middle way." Real wages of industrial workers (after taxes) have increased about 250 percent from 1939 to 1979, partly as a result of Sweden's non-participation in World War II. With some inflation-induced exceptions, most types of income differentials have been considerably reduced.

The rapid shift of the economic structure toward the service industries and large manufacturing plants, inducing large-scale migration from the countryside to the cities (and also immigration from other countries). These are fundamental features of growth but also involve structural changes that create or exacerbate problems of social adjustment.

The political stability that permitted the Social Democrats, allied with a very strong trade union movement, to govern virtually without interruption from 1932 to 1976, when they lost out to the "Bourgeois" coalition, probably because of the combined effects of "stagflation" and fears of nuclear energy expansion.

It is important to note that some of the most spectacular trends culminated around 1970 and have since been reversed or have leveled off, at least temporarily. Here I refer to the rapid rise of real incomes, the excess demand for labor, the influx of youth to secondary schools and universities (although enrollment rates have recently begun to rise again), and the "green wave" (or nostalgia for a rural environment) among the population in general. On the other hand, the rate of inflation accelerated in the 1970s in Sweden as in other countries. The negative repercussions of this acceleration (and of the less rapid inflation of the 1960s as well) on the social and political climate and on societal phenomena have been important, but difficult to define in detail. The growing inequities between those who lose and those who gain from inflation can only have negative effects on loyalty to a society that permits such injustices.

During this period, the central political debates have concerned how much of the national income should be used for private purposes and how much for publicly financed services and transfers to needy groups. This conflict has, however, been

a matter of degree. Controversial debates have rapidly faded after particular issues have been settled and the reforms have been put into practice. The major portion of public services and transfer payments has sooner or later been accepted by the majority in all of the political parties. Public opinion has also largely been unified on such matters as the school reforms and the vigorous expansion of labor market policies, designed to keep unemployment at low levels even during periods of worldwide or national economic recessions. Despite the growth of public expenditures until they exceed one-half of the national income, the increase of private income after taxes for most people has been high enough so that the growth of public spending has gained majority acceptance.

This broad acceptance of Sweden's social policies was confirmed by a public opinion poll in 1974, conducted by the Study Association for Business and Society (SNS), which indicated that a majority in each of the political parties expressed a preference for public services rather than tax reductions, and even indicated acceptance of higher taxes for such purposes as better schools, pensions, childrens' allowances, public transportation, etc. By 1978 the majority of those in the bourgeois parties and about 50 percent of the total population no longer held this view. Finally, a poll in spring 1980 (about 1,000 interviews by SIFO for SNS) on measures to restore Sweden's economy (i.e., improve the balance of payments and increase investments) clearly indicated a return to the 1974 position—a majority of those polled favored increasing public services and drastically reducing private consumption.

Political and Social Attitudes

Five parties are traditionally represented in Parliament in proportion to the number of votes they receive. In the 1979 election, the results were as follows: Moderates (conservatives), 20.3 percent (up 4.9 percentage points from 1976); Center (formerly Farmers' Party), 18.1 percent (down 6.0); People's Party (liberals), 11.1 percent (down 0.5); Social Democrats, 43.2 percent (up 0.5); and Communists, 5.0 percent (up 0.8).

Unrepresented were the Christian Democrats with only 1.4 percent of the vote and a few extreme leftist groups with only 0.8 percent (up 0.4) combined.

Following the election of September 1976, a three-party bourgeois coalition took over the government from the Social Democrats.[2] However, the coalition split in 1978, leaving the People's Party alone in the government. The situation was again changed after the 1979 elections, with the coalition resuming control of the government.

The Social Democratic Labor Party traditionally had a strong following among the young, although some of its youthful adherents left it as they grew older and achieved rising incomes. But the leading role of the Social Democrats in the series of pension reforms also gave them strength among older people.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the situation changed to some extent, as students developed animosity toward university reforms, and young families became disturbed over the continuing housing shortage and other troubles connected with the changes in the economic structure. Some of the election successes of the bourgeois parties from 1970 to 1976, and their ouster of the Social Democrats from the government in 1976, were clearly due, not only to inflation and youth unemployment, but also to youthful opposition, more or less warranted, to the governing party on such issues as environmental pollution, the danger of nuclear energy, and bureaucratism. Having been in control of the government for 44 years, the Social Democrats came to be identified with the "Establishment." Thus, they were considered responsible not only for improved pensions and other social insurance and welfare reforms, full employment policies, and improvement of collective amenities, but also for the trend toward big industry, large capital concentrations, big cities, high taxes, and pronounced inflation. Despite energetic

[2]One often speaks of "Bourgeois" versus "Socialist" parties and blocs in Sweden without derogatory intention, even though the struggle for coalitions to form a government is carried on only among the former group of parties.

policies against environmental pollution, they had to take the blame for the negative environmental and social side effects of rapid economic growth. They were particularly blamed when growth was temporarily stopped by national and international economic problems, such as stagflation and the energy crisis.

Moreover, among some groups and in certain areas, there had appeared a "new poverty," as a result of social pressure toward a lifestyle characterized by high-quality apartments, automobiles, TV sets, expensive sports equipment for children, and other "keep-up-with-the-Jones's" features, which could be felt as burdensome costs of living as well as benefits of an affluent society. Along with other aspects of big-city and suburban life, this feeling seems to have contributed in the 1960s to the "green wave" of nostalgia for village and country life.

These developments led to a marked expansion of the former Farmers' Party, now called the Center Party, which took votes from both the Social Democrats and the Liberal and Conservative parties that had earlier dominated the city bourgeois electorate.[3] The Center Party's youth organization grew rapidly and undertook a semi-Marxist struggle for egalitarianism, accusing the Social Democrats of collusion with big business. They also fought for decentralization and protection of the environment, as well as against nuclear energy plants later in the 1970s. The nuclear energy issue, in particular, contributed strongly to the fact that their party leader became prime minister in 1976.

In the 1976 election—the first in which 18- and 19-year olds could vote—young people aged 18 to 22 gave four percentage points fewer votes to the Social Democrats and six points more to the Communists than did the electorate at large. Among the bourgeois parties, the Center Party received many more and the Conservative and Liberal parties fewer votes from young people than from older voters. Later, the deterioration of the economic situation and other difficulties of the coalition government—including internal strife over the nuclear energy issue—gave the Social Democrats new strength, particularly among the young.

[3] An exception to this trend was the spectacular victory of the Social Democrats over the recession and their political opponents in 1968.

Opinion polls conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics (SCB) from 1977 to May 1980 showed nearly the same adherence to the Social Democrats among those aged 18 to 21 and 19 to 24 as among the electorate at large. Overrepresented among the young were the Center Party and the Communists, whereas the Conservatives and (even more so) the Liberals had few youthful adherents. This picture changed in the election of September 1979, in which the Conservatives gained strength to the detriment of the Center Party, indicating a shift, not least among youth. Apparently this was partly a reaction of people with higher education against the university reform program, in which the Labor and Center parties cooperated, as we shall see later. Moreover, the 1979 increase for the conservatives indicated to some extent a Swedish echo of the "tax revolt," which was appearing in more violent form in other countries with much lower taxes than those of Sweden. On the other hand, the gain for Social Democrats in 1979 failed by only one seat in Parliament from bringing the party back into control of the government.

The Communists, who also gained in the 1979 election, had been experiencing a decline, particularly among the young, throughout most of the postwar period. This was largely attributable to Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and also to economic progress in Sweden. In the 1960s, the Communists tried to reshape themselves as a democratic party under a new name, "Left Party Communists" (suggesting a certain parallel to "Euro-communism," although this expression is not used in Sweden). This led to defections both of old die-hard Stalinists and of young extremists (the "Abyss" people). American actions in Vietnam and Chile have helped the Communists to increase their following, especially among students. Their exploitation of events in those two countries has, however, been hampered by the fact that most of the other political youth organizations were likewise involved in protest and solidarity movements for the two peoples concerned.

All of the political parties have youth organizations, usually for persons less than 25 or 30 years old. As in other Nordic countries, membership in political youth clubs in Sweden is rather high, compared with the situation in other democratic

countries. In 1978 their total membership was about 210,000, or 15 percent of the population aged 12 to 24. Of this total, the Conservatives had 37,000; the Center Party, 65,000; the Liberals, 18,000; the Christian Democrats, 4,000; the Social Democrats, 68,000; and the Communists, 20,000. In all cases the figures include those aged 12 to 24, because this is the basis on which political as well as other youth organizations receive financial support from the state and municipalities.[4] The total membership of political youth clubs had declined by nearly 50 percent in the first 15 years after the war. However, it rose from 165,000 in 1960 to 225,000 in 1968. After that, there was a slight decline to 1978, which occurred despite increasing support from public funds since 1970. In addition to a contribution for their central administrative expenses, the clubs receive 10 KR for each "meeting or other organized arrangement with at least five participants for more than one hour."

Membership in these organizations, at least in the case of the larger ones, has traditionally been lower in large cities than in small towns and sparsely populated areas. Thus, they have suffered from the shift of population to the cities. They have also suffered from the competition of the commercial entertainment industry, organized sports, and tourism, all of which have increased with urbanization and rising income levels. Earlier, the political clubs often organized entertainment for the young. Their study circles met part of the demand for civic education, which the schools and television have now taken over to a considerable extent. On the other hand, students in both secondary schools and universities show a much greater interest in political matters than working youth. Thus, the expansion of the secondary schools and universities should have helped the expansion of the political clubs as well. The active membership is, of course, smaller than the statistics indicate, but, even so, those who are included in the data are largely actual fee-paying members.

[4] Information from the State Youth Council *(Statensungdomsråd)*, Oct. 1978.

In addition, there are Maoist, Trotskyite, Anarchist, and Syndicalist groups, mostly with academic bases and indulging in mutual disputes, which have recently mirrored the political perturbations in China and Southeast Asia. In parliamentary elections, these groups always receive less than one percent of the votes among them. They are not much stronger than that in opinion polls, even among the young.

The youth organizations of the established parties all try to function as activists within their parties, pressing for "a clear stand" on such matters as aid to less developed countries, condemnation of manifestations of big power (East or West) domination or suppression in small countries, environmental protection, etc. Sometimes this leads to embarrassing situations for party leaders, who have to enter into compromises with other parties or to display caution in foreign policy. The parties, however, appear largely to be able to avoid organized rebellion, either by isolating the rebels as small splinter groups or by meeting their demands halfway.

Public opinion polls show that voting nowadays is determined less by social class and more by ideology than formerly. Although ideology is often inherited from parents, this type of conformity also seems to be declining.

Echoes of the French *événements* of 1968 were noted even in Sweden, but here they were limited to academic youth. Their efforts to dramatize their rebellion had the effect, primarily, of antagonizing the firmly reformist working class. For a number of years, from 1968 on, Communist and other leftist groups were strong at most universities, sometimes gaining a majority in student body elections. Now the old order is largely restored—that is, most universities are, once again, strongholds of conservative ideologies, although the Communists maintain some strength there. The Social Democrats, representing neither the interests of academic status groups nor youthful opposition to the "Establishment," have never been strong among the students.

Cutting across party lines are some other organizations that are concerned with particular social and political issues. Most important among these are the environmental protection

associations, protesting against nuclear energy and utilization of poisonous chemicals in forestry and agriculture. They also push for consumer protection à la Nader, form pressure groups in city planning, etc. In recent years, they have had some 100,000 members, about half of whom are under age 25.

Organizations of school pupils and military draftees hold conventions at least annually and produce publications, resolutions, and petitions articulating demands for radical changes in existing policies. These organizations are apparently largely directed by militant minorities, not always supported by the more pragmatic and less politically engaged majority. The school pupils' organizations are, however, represented along with other important organizations on the National School Board.

The activities of all of these organizations, together with associations concerned with Vietnam and Chile, and a rise in the number of "wild-cat" strikes may have given the impression of a strong breakthrough of activism among new groups concerned with new issues particularly attracting young people. To a considerable extent, this is a misleading result of the disproportionate attention given by mass media to deviant behavior. A closer look reveals that the militants are still limited in number and that their organizations are rather unstable. At any rate, they have not made much of an impression on teenagers. In response to an opinion poll question about what action they might possibly take to "do something" about matters they regarded as important, 82 percent of the 18-year-olds and 93 percent of those aged 15 and 16 answered negatively or (usually) not at all. This indifference was particularly pronounced among working class youth (State Youth Council, 1972).

This indifference among youth was not new, but it is difficult to determine what has been happening to these attitudes since 1972 or to gauge long-term trends. Participation of those aged 18 to 20 in the 1976 election, when those aged 18 to 19 were voting for the first time, was 89 percent, compared with 92 percent for the total population. This figure was higher than most people seem to have expected. Among those aged 21 to 24, 91 percent voted, or almost as large a percentage as among

the total population. The data confirm the indications from various teenager surveys that there is a rather rapid increase in interest in public affairs between age 16 and 20 or older, but that this is usually channeled into established political organizations.

On the basis of experience, my guess is that the strength of the special-issue organizations and movements—expressions of idealism, maladjustments, or simply well-advised self-interest of particular groups—will be relatively short-lived. The "good" or at least tolerable elements will be adapted and socialized by the established organizations, while the "bad" or pathological phenomena will be contained by the counteraction of the organized power of society, and particularly by the well-established "folk-movements": the trade unions, political parties and their youth clubs, free educational associations, religious and temperance organizations, and sport and hobby clubs.

This pattern is well known, for example, in trade unions. From time to time, the Communists or other dissident minorities have been able temporarily to exploit a particular situation of discontent, arising where the respective local organizations have either not been alert enough or have been hampered by loyalty to the LO (the central labor organization) or to the Labor Party government. Whenever this has led to the opposition's taking over a local union, the Social Democrats have started propaganda and organization drives that have restored their dominance. Some of the most spectacular cases of "wildcat" strikes, for example, have been clearly connected with centralized wage bargaining under the LO ideology of solidarity in wage policy, under which special groups, rightly or wrongly, have felt mistreated, either because of too much or too little narrowing of wage differentials.

Obviously, all predictions in this field are precarious. We have seen how a few hundred determined revolutionaries have been able, through sabotage and terrorist action, to threaten the political and social climate in a country otherwise apparently well-established on the path of democratic tolerance (the Baader-Meinhoff group in the Federal Republic of Germany). No Swede can guarantee that "this can't happen here," although

its probability is extremely low. One of the arguments for the recent departures from Sweden's traditions as a strictly legalist society (the institution of expulsion of otherwise legal immigrants on the mere suspicion of their adherence to terrorist groups) was that Sweden, with its mild criminal laws, tolerant administrative setup, and high level of wealth (which would attract robberies), could become a haven for all sorts of subversive movements, terrorism, drug trafficking, etc. This has not as yet happened on a scale large enough to shatter the Swedish calm, but that is, of course, no guarantee against events that could provoke reactions—trying to drive out the Devil by Beelzebub.

In connection with the March 1980 referendum on nuclear energy policy, a temporary anti-nuclear coalition of the Center Party, the Communists, the Christian Democrats, and many environmentalist groups emerged. (These environmentalist groups included members from all parties and many young people.) The referendum was defeated in favor of a more positive but still cautious nuclear energy policy, and the coalition disintegrated rapidly afterward. It is too early to tell whether this episode will have any lasting effects on political developments in the country.

Attitudes toward Society, Parents, and Schools

Various aspects of teenage life and attitudes have been studied by the State Youth Council, an agency created to advise the government on youth questions and to administer support to youth organizations. In 1972 and 1974, several thousand young persons aged 15, 16, and 18 years were interviewed in three towns with a total population of 125,000. Between these two surveys, a campaign was undertaken in cooperation with local youth organizations to engage more young people in their activities. During this period, total membership increased from 55 to 59 percent of the group studied. In 1975, the percentages belonging to different organizations were as follows: sports, 40 percent; religion, 6 percent; politics, 4 percent; scouts, 3 percent; temperance, 2 percent; miscellaneous (including hobby clubs), 15 percent; and total (including some double memberships), 70 percent of the surveyed youth.

Membership was much more common among boys than among girls (83 versus 56 percent), owing mainly to the greater interest of boys in sports (54 percent versus 26 percent). Among 18-year-olds, those in academic schools had the highest rate of membership (75 percent), followed by those in vocational schools (65 percent), and those in paid employment (58 percent). Membership in sports and temperance organizations declined with advancing age, whereas membership in political and miscellaneous organizations went up. The declines were particularly marked among the girls. Differences among social status groups were especially large for religious organizations (10 percent in the highest, and 4 percent in the lowest social status group). They were also large for miscellaneous organizations.

Questions about attitudes to politics and religion produced overwhelmingly indifferent or negative answers, if any at all. However, interest in politics increased rather rapidly with age.

Another interesting result was a pronounced difference between 18-year-olds who were employed and those who were students in academic programs. Only 11 percent of the former, compared with 38 percent of the latter, expressed a "positive attitude" to politics in 1974. Among the unemployed, the figure was actually as low as 3 percent. More specific questions confirmed these differences, which were regarded as one of the most disquieting results of the inquiry: apathy and pessimism about the possibilities of improving society or of improving one's own lot among the least privileged groups.

On the other hand, the three towns may not have been fully representative of Sweden on this point. In the country as a whole, membership in political youth organizations is 15 percent of the 15- to 24-age group. The score of 4 percent for those aged 15, 16, and 18 in the three towns cannot have been attributable entirely to their lower average age. Moreover, working-class political youth clubs have always been, and still are, very strong.

On other types of attitudes, the results tended to indicate relative conservatism or conformity with tradition. For example, there has been a rather vigorous public debate about giving grades in schools, with some militant groups demanding the

virtual abolition of grades so as to reduce strain and competition among pupils. A majority of the survey respondents, however, wanted to keep the grades systems as it was. Other more recent information also indicates similar "silent majority conservatism" on this point, although practically all of the political youth organizations, school pupils' organizations, and teachers and students' organizations have come out strongly in favor of abolition of grades.

Another example of conservatism or indifference concerned the answers to two questions asking the young people to indicate things they criticized or appreciated in Swedish society. About one-half had nothing to suggest, and the other half largely mirrored attitudes of the general public. Insofar as they could imagine "doing something about it," they favored working through established organizations, political parties, etc. Dissident action groups were not regarded with much favor, despite the disproportionate attention given to them in the mass media.

Even though great efforts have been made to break down stereotyped sex-role traditions, the perspective of the youngsters on choice of career and "tasks to perform in life" was still traditional. They were, however, largely positive about efforts toward equalization between the sexes, at least verbally. Their declared attitudes toward alcohol could be characterized as "well-behaved," displaying a tendency to regard limited consumption as a condition for "having fun." Narcotic drugs were anathema to everybody responding to the survey.

In Gothenburg (the second largest city in Sweden, with half a million inhabitants), another study concerning intergenerational attitudinal resemblances or differences was undertaken by the Department of Pedagogy of the University of Gothenburg in 1971 and 1974. The results indicated that both adolescents and parents believe that the other party does not appreciate them or share their values but in reality there was a high degree of conformity to parental values on the part of the children. Differences in external appearance—clothes, hair styles, musical tastes, etc.—contributed to mutual beliefs about different values and attitudes. In more important matters, the young people had largely inherited their parents' views. Note that this, in a way, is the opposite of submission to authority.

The state-sponsored Crime Prevention Council has also undertaken a study to determine whether the increased frequency of crime among young people is connected with a difference of the "norm climate" between generations. The survey included nearly 3,000 persons in Sweden aged 18 to 65, of whom about two-thirds responded. The results indicate that the young have a more easygoing attitude to various sorts of illicit behavior than do adults. They are also less likely to respond affirmatively to the statement "the most important thing in life is to behave well" (the Swedish expression used refers to social, economic, and legal behavior). Among those aged 18 to 24, 24 percent did not agree with this statement, compared with only 3 percent of those over 50 years of age. Similarly, relatively fewer of the young (37 percent) felt that "obedience to one's parents is the most useful thing for children to learn," compared with the oldest age group (73 percent). In all age groups, however, those with high educational attainment expressed less appreciation for obedience than those with lower educational levels.

The young were more willing to yield to temptations to disregard traffic regulations and tax-paying requirements (or at least to confess to such attitudes); and they less often expressed moral disapproval of banal crimes such as theft. They were, however, almost as negative as adults in their attitudes toward burglary and robbery. Similar results on these points have appeared in inquiries by the Swedish Institute for Opinion Research (SIFO). The authors point out that we cannot determine whether the differences between the young and the old have come about recently or have always existed. There are signs that some change has occurred, but there are also indications that differences in crime rates between young people and adults are only loosely related to differences in normative attitudes.

Annual surveys conducted by the State Council for Psychological Defense indicated that, in the years from 1965 to 1969, young people were about as likely as adults to think that Sweden ought to resist an attack by armed forces. About 75 percent answered affirmatively, on the average, over the five years, while 13 percent responded negatively, and 12 percent said they did not know. From 1971 to 1978, however, only about 65 percent of the young responded affirmatively to this

question, whereas the percentage giving affirmative responses among adults did not change. According to the 1979 investigation, young people have come back to the same level as that of the adults on the frequency of such responses, those of the latter still being about three-fourths affirmative.

A minority of young people, especially men in universities, also have distinctive views on other points. Although there is high popular acceptance of the size of Sweden's defense expenditures (about 4 percent of the Gross National Product) and of the compulsory military draft, an appreciable percentage of these students disagrees. Young people are also somewhat more likely than adults to express the view that "many changes are needed" in Swedish society, and university students are at the top in this respect. The differences, from the average of 17 percent for the population as a whole, however, are not dramatic.

In all these matters, there seems to be a clear relationship between attitudinal changes and cyclical variations in the economy. The young are particularly sensitive to changes in the economic climate and are also most directly affected by upswings and downswings in employment.

The Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI) has supplied various figures about the situation of young people and its development, based on the Levels-of-Living Surveys of 1968 and 1974. Here we use those about participation in political and trade union activities. Membership in political organizations grew from 14 percent in 1968 to 18 in 1974. While membership in trade unions largely followed the development of employment in the same age group, the number elected for trade union assignments grew from 1 percent to 4. The group not belonging to any voluntary organization at all declined from 47 percent to 40. (The number of interviews in these comprehensive inquiries was 6,000 in each year, of which over 1,000 were 18 to 24.)

By courtesy of the Swedish Institute for Opinion Research (SIFO), we can also present some material from this institute's inquiries about attitudes and behavior of youth in Sweden over a series of years. These concern various aspects discussed

throughout this chapter. They, as well as the other studies mentioned, have contributed to forming the author's more sweeping statements about the intensification of both positive and negative, constructive and destructive features of Swedish youth behavior and its development.

A digest of the SIFO material is presented in Table 1. The figures refer to age 18 to 24, if not otherwise stated. The number of interviews were around 1,000, at a coverage of about 80 percent. The figures show percentages of all answers.

Table 1. SIFO polls of Swedish youth

a) *Drinking habits and drugs*	*1972-73*[a]	*1975-76*[a]	*1979-80*[a]
How often are you drinking to the extent that you feel affected?			
Never	39%	35%	34%
Twice a month or more	14	17	17
Use of narcotic drugs:	*1968*	*1971*	*1979-80*
Knows someone who is a drug addict	14	17	15
Has tested some narcotic drug sometime	5	7	13
b) *Political militancy*	*1968*	*1970*	*1980*
Have you ever participated in marches with signs? Yes:	7	10	23
Membership in clubs or associations:			
Trade union		24	26
Political organization		5	7
Sports clubs (including motor)		36	53
Red Cross, church, temperance		22	13[b]
No membership		33	21
Political sympathies (Jan. 1980):	*12-17*	*18-24*	*18-w*
Conservatives	25.5	23.5	24
Liberals	6.5	9.5	8.5
Center Party	16	14.5	16
Christian Democrats	0.5	1	0.5

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Table 1. SIFO polls of Swedish youth *(continued)*

b) Political militancy (continued)			
Political sympathies (Jan. 1980):	*12-17*	*18-24*	*18-w*
Social Democrats	45.5	39.5	43.5
Communists	5.5	11.5	7
Other (extreme left)	0.5	0.5	0.5
All with party	100	100	100
Without party	12.5	6.5	4
Numbers interviewed	(651)	(773)	(1050)

	Interviews, Jan. 1980	*Actual Voting, March 1980*	
Attitudes to nuclear energy:	(18-24)	(18-60)	(All)
Intending to vote in referendum:			
For 12 plants during 25 years,	42	56	58
For 6 plants during 10 years	42	36	38
By blank ballot	5	8	4

c) *Personal (physical and cultural) activities*	*1971*	*1978*
Physical exercise, all ages (20 to 70):		
Undertaking somewhat regular exercise:		
Walking	67	60
Jogging	11	23
Swimming	17	21
Bicycling	22	28
Other (ski, gymnastics, ballgames)	51	55
Totals (More than one answer per person gives totals above 100%)	168	187
Membership in organizations promoting physical exercise:		
Ages 20 to 70		
Men	29	32
Women	10	19
Ages 18 to 30		
Men	n.a.	41
Women	n.a.	22
Interest in literature:	*1972*	*1978*
Has read at least one book in last month (not textbook or professional		

Table 1. SIFO polls of Swedish youth *(continued)*

c) Personal (physical and cultural) activities (continued)			
Interest in literature *(continued)*	*1972*		*1978*
matters) (Confirmed by statistics on borrowing from libraries.)	1972		1978
Age: 18 to 70	37		47
Under 40	44		56
d) *Sex habits and attitudes*			
Changing attitudes to marriage:	*1969*		*1980*
"Loving couples do best living together without formal marriage."			
Agree	23	38	35
First sexual experience (median age)	*1967*		*1979*
(Before the war: ca. 18 years)			
Men	16.6		15.5
Women	17.2		15.2
"Rich emotional life is more important than success in life."			
Agree	58		74
Use of "the pill"	(Actual use)		(Preferred Method)
Young women (<30)	27		59
Older women (>30)	6		20
Abortion: The majority approves the law of 1975 (free abortion until the 18th week), but health hazards lead some people to think it should be somehow counteracted. Your view?			
For counteraction: 18 to 60	24		41
Under 30	n.a.		36

[a]Average of two inquiries.

[b]This decline is not confirmed in the complete statistics of the State Youth Council.

Finally we reproduce some results from a comparative international survey of youth in 11 countries, based on 2,000 interviews in each country. This was sponsored by the Japanese government in winter 1977-78. (Partial comparisons can be

made with a similar inquiry in 1972. In Sweden the interviews were carried out by SIFO.)

In Table 2 we show the frequency of various answers by respondents in Sweden and the U.S.A., indicating in parentheses the position among the eight highly industrialized countries participating: Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Sweden, the U.K., and the U.S.A. (We have not included in this comparison the three countries where economic and social conditions are so different that comparisons appear less meaningful, although their inclusion would not have changed the picture radically.)

Table 2. Extracts from *The Youth of the World and Japan*: percentages of 2,000 interviewed, 18 to 24[a]

	Sweden		*U.S.A.*	
a) Relations to parents				
Whom do you talk with when you have worries? (14 possibilities suggested)				
Father	58%	(1)	51%	(3)
Mother	40	(1)	31	(3)
Neighborhood or school friends	14	(8)	26	(3)
Priest, minister, or rabbi	1	(8)	6	(1)
Do not discuss with anybody	5	(8)	7	(4)
Have you had any real clashes with your father and/or mother in the last two or three years?				
No clashes	85	(1)	74	(4)
Did things go well in your home when you grew up?				
Yes	71	(1)	70	(2)
Not very well, or badly	4	(8)	11	(4)
Are you satisfied with your life at home or not?				
Yes, satisfied	74	(1)	73	(2)
Yes, more or less	21	(.)	18	(.)
No, dissatisfied	1	(8)	6	(7)
(Highest dissatisfaction: Japan 16%)				
Supporting parents during old age?				
Inclined to support them	61	(8)	94	(1)
Preferably they should support themselves or go on social welfare[b]	33	(1)	6	(8)

Table 2. Extracts from *The Youth of the World and Japan:* percentage of 2,000 interviewed, 18 to 24[a] *(continued)*

	Sweden		*U.S.A.*	
b) *Mental health, interpersonal relations, and personal habits*				
Feelings about life:				
Very happy and hopeful	15	(8)	35	(3)
More happy and hopeful than sad and worried	69	(1)	51	(3)
(Most hopeless: France 5%)				
Religious preferences:				
No religious belief	68	(2)	10	(6)
(Most without religion: Japan 71%)				
Anything troubling you these days? (15 alternatives suggested)				
Nothing troubling me	38	(1)	23	(6)
Money	19	(8)	45	(2)
Sex and relations with others	2	(8)	20	(2)
Personal appearance	1	(8)	10	(2)
From which of the following do you get personal satisfaction?				
Being engrossed in work	68	(1)	36	(4)
Doing something on behalf of society	15	(7)	34	(1)
Goals in life:				
To live as I like	85	(1)	77	(2)
To get rich or acquire social position	4	(8)	11	(7)
(Highest score for getting rich: Japan 41%)				
Do you have close friends?				
Yes (of both sexes)	92	(1)	83	(3)
No friends	0.5	(8)	2	(7)
Ways of spending weekends:				
Doing nothing in particular	10	(8)	28	(1)
Watching TV, looking at magazines	39	(6)	46	(3)
With my friends	82	(1)	70	(4)
Reading books, listening to music	45	(3)	40	(4)
Taking walks	26	(1)	19	(6)
Watching movies, plays, or sports	53	(1)	46	(3)
Playing sports	40	(3)	35	(4)
Participating in organized work activities	7	(1)	5	(6)
Doing housework	40	(1)	33	(2)

(continued on next page)

Table 2. Extracts from *The Youth of the World and Japan:* percentages of 2,000 interviewed, 18 to 24[a] *(continued)*

	Sweden		*U.S.A.*	
c) *Attitudes toward work and school*				
Important factors in choosing a job:				
A job that brings high salary	26	(8)	45	(4)
A job through which I can serve society	25	(1)	20	(5)
A job through which I can develop my individuality and abilities	69	(3)	68	(4)
A secure job	64	(1)	42	(5)
Would you like to continue working where you are right now (company, office, etc.)?				
Yes	67	(1)	54	(4)
Which gives you more satisfaction, your job or your life outside the job?				
Life outside the job	50	(7)	71	(1)
Choosing between a tough busy job with responsibility and authority and one without. . . .				
Prefer the easy job	50	(1)	18	(7)
"Men should go out to work while women stay at home and take care of the house."				
Disagree (expression for sex equality) (Lowest: Japan 32% disagree)	86	(1)	71	(2)
(To those in schools) Are you satisfied with your school life?				
Yes (more or less) (Lowest: U.K. 54%)	80	(2)	84	(1)
d) *Attitudes toward society at large*				
Do you think that your country has something to be proud of or not? (Choose as many as you like on the card):				
History and cultural inheritance	15	(8)	68	(1)
Sports	44	(3)	56	(2)
Level of education	41	(2)	61	(1)
Social welfare (Highest score among alternatives for Swedes.)	60	(1)	24	(5)
Science and technology	29	(5)	66	(1)

Table 2. Extracts from *The Youth of the World and Japan:* percentages of 2,000 interviewed, 18 to 24[a] *(continued)*

	Sweden		*U.S.A.*	
d) Attitudes toward society at large (continued)				
Suppose you are dissatisfied with society, what attitude do you think you would take?				
Not only vote but also be active (e.g., in demonstrations, strikes, etc.) insofar as legal	53	(2)	62	(1)
Will resort to illegal measures (e.g., violence) or become a dropout from society	4	(8)	9	(6)
(Highest for such behavior: France 20%)				

[a]Parenthetical figures show rank among eight highly industrialized countries.

[b]Low rating explicable by existence of comprehensive, generalized pension scheme.

Among the questions, some with numerous alternative answers, there are a surprising number of cases where Sweden comes out either at the top or the bottom of the league. (Our selection is concentrated upon such cases. Note that the reading of the questions and the enumerations of alternatives is abbreviated in many cases.)

Largely the Japanese study confirms, but sometimes it casts doubt upon the statements made in the foregoing, which often were based upon less systematic evidence, e.g., inquiries in a smaller number of cities, etc. (I got access to the complete Japanese report after all the rest was written and let the contradictions stand as food for thought.)

To Swedish readers, it will certainly give satisfaction that the Japanese survey implies a refutation of recently appearing mass media generalizations that present Swedish youth as particularly unhappy and badly behaved, allegedly because of lack of contact and confidence between them and their parents.

According to the Japanese inquiry, youth in Sweden were those most inclined to confide in their parents when they had problems. They showed the lowest frequency of clashes with the parents and the highest percentage expressing satisfaction with their lives at home, both now and earlier. Furthermore, those working for a living were most satisfied with their jobs, and those still studying were second only to American youth in their satisfaction with life in school. They declared the lowest tendency to demonstrate opposition by illegal means or by "dropping out of society."

The Japanese survey also casts doubt on the popular image of the Swedes as people with contact difficulties toward other persons. They reported the highest frequency of "close friends with whom I can talk about everything" and the lowest frequency of "no friends at all." They had the lowest frequency of worries about "sex and relations with others," about "personal appearance," and about money. Finally, while the U.S. was the country where the highest percentage of youth declared themselves as "happy and hopeful these days" (85 percent), the Swedes came next (84 percent). However, comparatively few Swedes answered "*very* happy. . . ." On the other hand, extremely few indicated depression and suicidal thoughts, even fewer than in the United States.

As concerns the use of leisure time during weekends the Swedes show the lowest frequency of passivity (10 percent "doing nothing in particular") and the Americans the highest (28 percent). On the other hand the latter were most interested in "doing something on behalf of society," while the Swedes were nearly at the bottom of the range on this point (15 percent). The latter were also—despite lack of conflict with their parents, or perhaps because of this—less willing than those in any other country to support them in old age, perhaps explicable by the comprehensive system for relatively high retirement pensions in Sweden.

It may be added that the previous youth survey by the Japanese government in 1972, although to a large extent posing other questions, showed a similar general picture. In Sweden 36 percent of the young stated that "my parents have different

ways of thinking and living from mine," but in all other countries the figure was around 60 percent (63 percent in the U.S.). In the other industrialized countries an average of 30 percent felt that "my parents expect too much of the future of their children," but in Sweden only 15 percent expressed this grievance toward their parents.

Comparisons with the 1972 inquiries tend to indicate that the Swedish youngsters establish their homes away from parents to an increasing extent (56 percent in 1978 against 51 in 1972), while the American situation was unchanged. The Swedes also indicate that they are getting somewhat less absorbed by TV and have begun to react a little against commercialism in supermarkets and the like.

It is recognized that international comparisons based on answers to attitudinal questions are precarious. Words can mean different things in different countries even if well translated, and verbal attitudes do not always conform to reality. The figures, however, may at least imply warnings against existing generalizations and stereotypes about people of different nationalities. With this warning I let the rest of the figures speak for themselves.

On the basis of a large number of opinion polls, Zetterberg, the director of SIFO, has tried to form a judgment about the development of attitudes and behavior of Swedish youth during the most recent decades. He says that most young people have views that are not very different from those of the older generation. However, it is particularly interesting to consider the views of the "pioneers"—that is, those who indicate changes of direction in the march of mankind through time. In the 1950s and 1960s, these pioneers were internationalist and also were more liberated sexually than youth in earlier periods. Then came the youth revolt, not only against actions of the superpowers in Vietnam and Czechoslovakia, but also against the police in one's own country and against the bureaucracy of big government and big corporations. Some of the rebels became Marxists and organized demonstrations in the rapidly growing universities, where they advocated student democracy. Others created a "green wave"—the dream of unpolluted nature and

the small "local society." Multinational companies, computers, and nuclear energy plants were anathema.

All this began to fade in the mid-1970s. Now the attractive thing for the pioneers was a little home not far from the parents' home; a little job in a little enterprise; a little love with a child following; and little change in society. No violent opinions, but kind understanding of both ideological heretics and drugged delinquents became the pattern.

The normal aggressiveness of youth, however, had not died. It had only lost any important objects to attack. Thus, its energies turned to meaningless vandalism, spontaneous speedway races in cars or on roller skates in city streets, and shoplifting in supermarkets. One demonstrates that one belongs to the "in" set by wearing clothes bearing the most popular trademark, and one shows one's superiority to the ideological "waves" of the 1960s by going back to the early 1950s via a greasy Travolta. Can we perhaps expect a reaction against this when the growing generation discovers how it is being manipulated by the masters of commercialism? There are some signs of this, but they are not yet strong. (Summary of a speech by Zetterberg, 1978.)

Youth and Industrial Relations

Among working youth, there are clear signs of a growing passivity in attitudes toward trade unions.[5] Not that membership in unions is declining—it is still growing, particularly among white-collar workers, while among blue-collar workers union membership has been almost 100 percent for a long time. But the fact that such membership results from administrative arrangements, much like social insurance, rather than from worker militancy, influences the attitudes of persons too young to have had any direct contact with the struggle for the breakthrough of unions.

[5]See *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism*, by W. Korpi, SOFI. His studies of participation in trade union meetings and various expressions of involvement in trade union matters among members of different ages point unequivocally in this direction. This does not necessarily imply a contradiction to the observations of the other SOFI study, mentioned above, that the small number of youths who take an active part in union work had grown strongly between 1968 and 1974.

Surveys have shown a much lower degree of appreciation of unions among the young than in higher age brackets. A vicious circle seems to be at work: declining idealist militancy is compelling unions to combine small locals into larger units in order to achieve efficiency in day-to-day union work, such as negotiations over grievances, local wage-rate adjustments, etc. This implies, however, a risk of reduced contacts between leaders and members and of weakening foresight relating to crisis situations. Thus, the number of wild-cat strikes has been increasing, particularly in economic boom periods. On the other hand, the number of such strikes is still small. About five minutes per worker have been lost per year recently, and about one hour in the peak year, 1975, in which there were nearly 300 wild-cat strikes involving a total of only 35,000 workers in a labor force of 4 million. But the phenomenon is a warning signal.

One may conclude, on the basis of attitudinal surveys and other signs, that the older generation of trade unionists, despite considerable efforts through trade union schools and study circles, is not fully able to convey its ideology of working class solidarity to the younger generation. In recent years, however, the established unions, with the help of their political arm, the Social Democratic Party, have been very active in pressing for important reforms in industrial relations. Thus, they have successfully demanded legislation providing for codetermination; employment security guarantees; increased rights of workers' representatives to conduct union business during working hours and to stop dangerous production processes; a general right to educational leave; and a fifth week of vacation. They are also involved in a drive for abolition of piece-rate wage systems and have presented detailed proposals for the establishment of collective wage earners' funds on the basis of compulsory profit sharing and/or payroll charges for this purpose. With the exception, perhaps, of the demand for a gradual abolition of piece-rate systems, most of this seems to have come from experienced members and leaders looking for quality-of-life improvements and for ways to revitalize the movement, rather than from discontented younger workers.

The demand, however, for democratization of industrial life through codetermination apparently is very popular among the young. It received the highest positive score on a group of 20 questions asked in the surveys of youth attitudes in Gothenburg in 1971 and 1974 (mentioned earlier). Other opinion polls tend to confirm this observation.

Another aspect of emerging attitudes toward work, in which young people may be in the lead, is a growth of absenteeism in industry. There are controversies between employers' and workers' organizations as to whether this is a natural and even healthy reaction to boring work situations or an overutilization of sickness benefits, which have been gradually improved so that workers can "afford to be sick." At any rate, statistics indicate that short-period absenteeism, with or without a declaration of illness, is particularly high in the younger age brackets. One answer to this problem is the establishment of "flexi-time," institutionalizing irregular hours of work. This has been, however, largely confined to offices thus far. Another answer is the marked expansion of part-time work for women. Practically all young women now go back to work even after having children, but about three-fourths of these mothers prefer part-time work.

Immigrant Youth as a Long-Term Problem

The rapid growth of the immigrant population from practically zero before 1950 to about eight percent of the population today may gradually give rise to serious long-term problems. Sweden is probably doing more than any other European country to promote the integration of immigrants and their children into the social, cultural, economic, and political life of the country.[6] As long as the country enjoyed full employment, the population's tolerance for immigration was high. The appearance of animosity as a result of the recessions of 1971-73 and 1976-78,

[6]Sweden is the first country in the world to have given immigrants who are not yet naturalized the right to vote in municipal elections. The only condition is that the immigrant must have lived three years in the country. This first became effective in 1976. On the same basis, immigrants also had the right to vote in the referendum on nuclear energy in March 1980.

however, led to a stop of all immigration that was not covered by the Nordic Free Labor Market Treaty. Since that action was taken, non-Nordic immigration has consisted mainly of refugees and relatives of established immigrants, partly under a controlled reception system and partly on a semi-illegal basis.

Perhaps the ethnic collisions that have occasionally occurred among the young in recent years are as explicable as nineteenth-century fistfights between youngsters from different villages at provincial festivals. They can, however, seriously delay integration of immigrant groups into Swedish society and perhaps become the basis for self-perpetuating animosities.

A particularly serious source of worry is the relatively unsatisfactory situation of the first generation of immigrants' children. Here there is an obvious risk of deficient socialization with possible negative future repercussions. Particularly the easily distinguishable "black-skulls"—Turks, Yugoslavs, Greeks, Asians, and Africans—are frequently persecuted by classmates in schools. Despite efforts to make them bilingual, all of these groups, along with the largest immigrant group, the Finns, tend to become "semi-lingual," that is, deficient in both native and host languages. This is a handicap both in the schools and in the labor market. With growing understanding of this problem, efforts to improve the language training of these children have been enhanced during the past decade. Municipal school authorities have a legal obligation to offer two hours of native language training per week to immigrants' children, as well as extra help in the learning of Swedish. Despite these efforts, the problem is not fully solved.

This is an awkward situation. Groups that are ill-fated in the labor market and in social life are likely, quite naturally, to react by displaying antisocial behavior patterns, enhancing the concern over the growth of crime and of ethnic controversies. Already it is evident that youth delinquency is higher among immigrants than among natives. So is unemployment.

Sex and Family Problems

Victorian attitudes toward sex as a matter not to be discussed were the subject of determined attacks by sex educators, who

achieved a breakthrough in the 1930s. At the same time, the nation became conscious of the "crisis in the population question" (the title of a famous book by A. and G. Myrdal, 1934). Thus, since the 1940s, school curricula have gradually included franker education on "living together" problems, including sex as a means of both pleasure and procreation, contraceptive methods, etc. In the tradition of those who pioneered for this type of education, instruction has gradually moved away from restrictive moralizing toward giving youth a better understanding of the importance of mutual sensitivity in sexual relationships at any age, physiologically as well as psychologically and emotionally. Even the church now approves of this kind of sex education.

Various surveys have indicated that sexual activity begins at a lower age than earlier; median age is now little more than 15 for both sexes, a reduction of two or three years since before the war, despite the postponement traditionally associated with the prolongation of schooling. The reduction of the age of physiological puberty, liberation from parental authority, and access to improved contraceptives are natural explanations. However, an assumption that early sex activity is connected with earlier use of alcohol does not seem, on the other hand, to be confirmed by serious surveys.

It is also more common for young people to establish a permanent household and bear children without officially entering into marriage. Statistics relating to "children born out of wedlock" therefore, have shown a pronounced increase, but this does not imply a social problem of the old type (deserted mothers, etc.). From 1950 to 1976, the number of "illegitimate births" grew from 10 to 35 percent of all live births, and laws relating to eligibility for social insurance and services have largely been adapted to this new reality. Couples are being treated as married if they live together and have had children together.

Some young women deliberately choose to have children without establishing a household with the father. With modern contraceptives and free abortion, this tends to become a matter giving prestige to a woman, as it is now clearly a result of deliberate choice and not a shameful accident.

Moreover, the conditions for formal divorce have been liberalized; under a law enacted in 1974, traditional obstacles to divorce have been largely abolished. A marriage is now regarded as a free arrangement between two independent persons, either of whom can get a legal divorce on request. The question of who is the guilty party is no longer raised. If, however, there are children under age 16, a six-month delay for reconsideration is prescribed. In any case, the divorce rate had been growing so rapidly that an estimated one-third of marriages end in divorce, compared with a few percent before the war. The new law resulted immediately in a temporary increase, apparently indicating a latent demand among couples for whom divorce had previously been hindered by legal and administrative obstacles. Under the new law, separated, as well as unmarried, parents can have common custody of their children. It is not unusual for divorced or separated couples, particularly among the young, to cooperate systematically, helping each other to combine care for children with work or studies. On the other hand, the rise in the divorce rate since the war has probably contributed to exacerbating some of the youth problems discussed here.

The birthrate declined markedly after the "bulge" during and immediately following the war, and again following another rise in the birthrate during the years of rapid economic progress in the early 1960s.[7] It was 14.7 per 1,000 population in 1950 and 11.6 in 1976. This means that the average number of children per family is between one and two, implying a fertility rate below the rate necessary to maintain the population. Strong efforts are being made to facilitate child bearing and to induce both parents to share in the tasks of housekeeping and child care. Earlier legislation providing for a leave of absence for mothers at the time of childbirth has been amended to provide a right for both parents to have a total of 18 months of home leave, to be shared between them. Benefits equal to those of sickness insurance are given during the home leave. A right to a 25 percent reduction of hours of work has also been established

[7] For annual data on changes in the birthrate in Sweden and other industrial countries, see Gordon, with Trow (1979, pp. 18–19).

for parents until the child is eight years old, but in this case no benefits are provided. Substantial housing subsidies, also applied to reduce the difference between rents in new and pre-inflation dwellings, are given to families with children. Taking into account the high marginal tax rates, as well as the high benefit rates, it is relatively inexpensive for parents to reduce their working time in order to stay with their children. There is, however, a strong demand for child care centers to facilitate combining work and child rearing, and the state and municipalities are making vigorous efforts to meet this demand.

After a series of gradual liberalizations, abortion is now free on request until the twelfth week of pregnancy and until the eighteenth week under certain conditions. Since 1975, the first year of this law, abortion frequency has been practically constant at 20 cases per 1,000 women of ages 15 to 44. For those 15 to 19, there has been a marked downward trend from 29 to 21 per 1,000 from 1975 to 1979. It is a matter for debate whether the liberalization has caused any increase of abortions. Its main result is that there are now almost no clandestine abortions with their attendant high risk of death or sterility. Sex education in schools may lead to further reduction among young women.

Signs of Animosity and Apathy

Signs of alienation in the form of school discipline problems, particularly in the highest compulsory school grades, enrolling children aged 13 to 15, as well as alleged deficiencies in the adjustment of children leaving the comprehensive school for the next level of schooling are much debated. That school deficiencies, at least in the bigger cities, have become a serious problem in recent years is generally recognized, although it is mainly the Conservative Party that makes a political issue of it. The growth of the problem is confirmed both by opinion polls among teachers and by statistics on truancy and dropouts from the comprehensive schools. There is, however, less agreement about the real extent of the problem, the reasons for it, and the solutions. Perhaps it is not surprising that the prolongation of compulsory

schooling, together with the reduction of the age of puberty, tends to bring about antisocial, or at least undisciplined, behavior in the upper grades of the compulsory school. I will return to these matters in the chapter on education.

At the more seriously pathological fringe, clear expressions of alienation among a minority of youth take the form of increased juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, and drug addiction. The use of illicit drugs (chiefly marijuana) increased rather rapidly among a limited group from 1965 on, particularly in big cities, but has shown signs of retreat since 1970, except for a limited recent appearance of heroin and cocaine. It is difficult to determine to what extent these phenomena, interrelated as they are, have exceeded what might have been expected in view of rising real income and the associated increased access to alcohol (quantitatively the largest problem).

The consumption of alcoholic beverages in Sweden is lower than in most industrialized countries. In 1977, it was about 7 liters (about 7.4 quarts) per person over 15 years of age versus an average of 13 liters for the United States and most of Europe west of the Soviet Union.[8] Compared to 1950, this is an increase of about 50 percent both in Sweden and in the other countries, although in the case of Sweden, practically the entire increase occurred after 1960.

The "liquor question" has always played an important role in Swedish politics. There have been constant battles in Parliament over laws for the control of the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages. Thanks to their historical importance in the development of the Social Democratic labor movement and the prewar Liberal Party, the temperance organizations played a significant role in all of this. Since the war, however, their membership has rapidly declined. In 1960, it was about 400,000, and it had fallen to some 300,000 by 1978. Apparently, these organizations now recruit few young people, and a similar fate has affected their nearest relatives among folk movements—the low churches which also have promoted temperance

[8]The figures indicate the content of pure alcohol consumed in various forms—beer, wine, and hard liquor.

habits and attitudes. (As noted earlier, youthful idealism is now directed more toward environmentalist and internationalist issues.)

In 1955, the rationing system for hard liquor and wine, which had existed since 1913, was abolished, in the belief that it had made such beverages unnecessarily attractive (the "forbidden fruit"). The result, however, was a rapid increase in liquor consumption and the appearance of health damage. This trend was temporarily reversed by a policy of high liquor prices. Since 1960, increased sales of liquor have run practically parallel with that of food in general. There may be some additional increase in liquor consumption attributable to both legal and illegal home production and tax-free imports associated with growing tourism.

The use of alcohol, however, has increased most markedly among the young. Evidence from sample surveys is scattered but clear.[9] The number of nondrinkers, for example, declined from 22 to 8 percent among men aged less than 25 from 1947 to 1967-68, and from 15 to 11 percent among women in the same age group. Among those aged 25 and older, the proportions changed from 10 to 13 percent for men and from 36 to 31 percent for women. A number of other surveys confirm this picture of a particularly pronounced increase of alcohol consumption among those below the age of 20.

The spread of drinking habits among younger age groups continued, at least until the early 1970s. Experiments with changing the alcoholic content of beers and the price relationships between wine and hard liquor have been tried in efforts to reduce the alcoholic damage to health among the young. Whether these efforts have had or can have any effect is a matter of fierce debate in and out of Parliament. Highlights of surveys of school youth relating to the use of alcohol and drugs, thinner "sniffing," and smoking are given in Table 3. The data indicate an improvement in virtually all of these respects among school

[9]Most of the surveys were conducted by the Swedish Institute for Opinion Research (SIFO).

pupils in the 1970s, although it was not very pronounced. There is a clear relationship between uses of the various substances. Those who use alcohol at an early age tend to become users of drugs relatively frequently. They also develop more problems in school, in the forms of truancy, disliking school, and getting lower-than-average grades.

Other surveys relating to older age groups show higher percentages for the use of drugs—between 25 and 30 percent among students in higher education and about 17 percent among army

Table 3. Percentages of young people reporting use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco, in selected school grades, Sweden, 1971–72 and 1977–78[a]

	Year	*Grade 6*	*Grade 9*	*Secondary school*
Approximate age of students		13	15	17
Drinking alcohol sometimes	1971–72	62	91	94
	1977–78	59	91	(91)
"Drinking a lot"[b]	1971–72	1	7	5
	1977–78	½	7	(5)
Ever used narcotic drugs	1971–72	½–1	15	12
	1977–78	1	8	(8)
Using such drugs now	1971–72	0	5	3
	1977–78	0	2	(½–1)
Sniffed at least once	1971–72	6	18	5
	1977–78	½–1	6	(7)
Smoking	1971–72	13	42	38
	1977–78	10	34	(34)

[a]Each figure is an average of two years of surveys in compulsory schools. For secondary schools, the first figure is only for 1971, and the second figure (in parentheses) is for the years 1975 and 1976.

[b]"Drinking a lot" refers to those who responded that they drank at least three bottles of beer or 12 centiliters of hard liquor at least twice a week.

Source: Investigation of the Use of Alcohol, Narcotics, Tobacco, and Thinner Among School Youth (English translation of Swedish title), Central School Board (SÖ), 1978.

draftees, who are 18 years of age, all through the 1970s. This is partly a natural effect of the higher ages, since these young people have had more time to experiment.[10] The percentages are much lower—only a few percent—for current use of drugs (still mainly marijuana).

On the other hand, signs of habitual use of drugs in forms threatening to lead to serious addiction, or actually having passed that line, are very frequent among criminals. Among those arrested in Stockholm in recent years, well over 50 percent showed injection marks.

In spite of all of the studies, we have a poor knowledge of the actual number of addicts who represent serious problems for themselves and their relatives. Guesses range from a few thousand to more than 10,000, out of a population of 1.5 million in the age group most exposed to this danger (ages 15 to 30). In any case, this group overlaps to a considerable extent with the much larger group of more or less advanced alcoholics.

Worries over the effects of alcohol and other deleterious substances are, of course, based upon their potential effects on the health and work capacity of the users. There is also a correlation between the use of alcohol (with slow effects) and hard drugs (with rapidly disabling effects). Worries over these problems are exacerbated by their close relationship with crime.

Juvenile Delinquency

Young people, especially teenagers, commit the most crimes, in terms of numbers, with thefts and similar crimes dominating. The more serious crimes—murder, wholesale drug trading, tax frauds and other types of frauds, falsification of consumer goods, and clandestine use of poisonous materials in production —are more prevalent among adults but are less fully reported.

[10]The difference from the school inquiry figures is, however, also attributed to a certain downward bias in the latter, because drug-using pupils are more often absent because of truancy and therefore are underrepresented in the surveys. A longitudinal study of about 200 young people in and out of school in large cities from 1970 to 1976 confirms this and shows, in addition, that those who have left school have higher drug-using rates than those still in school at age 16 to 18.

The number of registered crimes has increased rapidly since World War II, and, to some extent, earlier, in Sweden at least as much as in other western countries. Many begin to fear that Sweden will reach American levels in rates of violent crime, although it still has quite a way to go before getting to this point. As for property offenses, such as theft and burglary, their frequency in Sweden has increased to the point of exceeding American rates (Table 4).

The total number of criminal offenses registered with the Swedish police has grown from about 160,000 in 1950 to over 700,000 in 1977. Most of these crimes are against property. The paradox is glaring. Today no one must go hungry, and yet an increasing number of thefts is committed. The reasons for this are matters for debate, but obviously the changes that have been associated with industrialization have been of great importance—

Table 4. Cases of crime known to the police, Sweden and the United States, 1977

(Number per 100,000 population above 15 years of age)

Type of crime	*Sweden*	*United States*
Violent (serious)	21	250
Violent (less serious)	273	n.a.
Robbery	42	187
Burglary	1,933	1,411
Theft, cars	556	448
Theft, other	4,014	2,730

Note: Not all types of crime are covered here, for example, fraudulence, rape, etc. The American figures have been adjusted to some extent to conform with Swedish definitions. Thus, sex aggression and robbery are excluded from the American figure for "violent" crimes. On the other hand, part of the large difference between Sweden's 21 and the American 250 is probably attributable to the fact that some of the crimes classified as "slightly violent" in Sweden are classified under "serious violence" in the United States, but it is also clear that the most serious violent crime, murder, is several times more frequent in the United States than in Sweden. So also is rape. The high Swedish figure for "other theft" may be partly due to the fact that a large proportion (about one-quarter) consists of stealing bicycles and mopeds; for the rest, this category is dominated by shoplifting and thefts from cars.

Source: Swedish Crime Prevention Council. *Crime Development, 1978 Survey* (English translation of Swedish title), Report 2. 1978.

increased urbanization, changes in family structure and role, changes in the mode of production and display of attractive goods, and many others. These changes have led to a loss in primary social control and to more opportunities for committing crimes.

At the same time, the economic harm to the victims has become less important—a factor that may explain the apparently increased tolerance toward crime. For a small farmer to lose his horse by theft was a catastrophe; for a modern city dweller to lose his car is much less so, because he is reimbursed by the insurance company and rents a car while waiting for reimbursement. In the first case, the thief was sometimes hanged; in the second case, neither the police nor the victim may find it worthwhile to make a big effort to find and punish the criminal. However, the case is registered so as to be eligible for insurance, whereas the plundering of orchards (the most popular old-time counterpart to the present "borrowing" of cars) probably seldom was recorded. The increase in the number of crimes since the 1920s, however, is far too large to be more than partially explained by such factors.

A different problem exists in cases of violence or for such crimes as burglaries or vandalism in public places. If these increase sharply, one may expect the development of serious mental health problems within the population. There are indications that this might be the case in the future, even in Sweden, but at present the problem is still under control.

Another observation worth making is that the sharpest increases in crime rates in Sweden have occurred in the case of types of crimes for which the rates are still low compared with those of the United States. Robbery, for example, scarcely existed in Sweden in 1950 but has increased with particular speed since 1965. This was the year when drug addiction began to occur and also when access to alcohol for the young (by introduction of "medium beer," a decision reversed in 1977) was liberalized. A large part of all offenses are committed by intoxicated people. The role of hard drugs, such as heroin and amphetamines, in relation to crimes like assault and robbery is still relatively small. Nevertheless, increased use of such drugs, as

well as of the softer drugs, has played a role in the increase of property thefts, since addicts need large amounts of money to buy their drugs.

Since most crimes are not solved, we cannot know the age of those committing them. As for solved cases, male youths aged 15 to 24 committed a little less than 1,000 per 100,000 population around 1950. By 1975-77, the rate was nearly 4,000 for the 15- to 17-age group, nearly 3,000 for the 18- to 19-age group, and 2,000 for those aged 21 to 24. As for those in the 25 and older group, the rates were much lower and grew less rapidly—from about 250 around 1950 to 500 in 1975-77. If women were included, these rates would be reduced by almost one-half, since crime rates for women are only about one-tenth of those for men.

The age incidence of crimes indicated by these rates is confirmed by criminological surveys of various types. For example, when samples of youngsters are asked about their criminal activities, the results indicate that the peak age for property offenses is 14 to 15; for car thefts, 16 to 17; and for assault and robbery, 18 to 25—conforming to the pattern revealed by statistics on convictions. Other inquiries also indicate that nearly everyone has committed unlawful acts, at least occasionally, in their youth. On the other hand, it is clear that only a few percent actually become criminals in more serious forms than casual shoplifting or "borrowing" of other people's automobiles and bicycles. Moreover, most young people cease any sort of criminal activity before the age of 18, and very few continue such activity beyond age 20.

Sociologists and criminologists tend to believe that the growth of teenage crime is at least partly explained by the fact that teenagers are no longer performing useful functions in society, as they once did when they were employed in the family or as cheap labor. They are held in school and are denied any form of adult responsibility. Probably there is something in this view. At any rate, one cannot regard the increase in youth unemployment as an important explanation of the rise in juvenile delinquency. The greatest growth in juvenile delinquency occurred during periods of virtually full employment, even for the

young—namely the war years, and the 1950s and 1960s. It did not occur during the high unemployment periods for both youth and adults, that is, the 1930s and parts of the 1970s.

To be sure, delinquency is higher among the unemployed, but we do not know why the reaction to individual unemployment is more likely to take the form of delinquent behavior than in earlier periods. Perhaps the antisocial reaction against individual bad luck is stronger when this is more of an exception than when large numbers of one's peers are experiencing unemployment.

Research in Sweden, as in other countries, shows the usual pattern of higher-than-average delinquency rates in large cities, among children in single-parent households, among those with poorer and less educated parents, etc. The growth of large cities and of single-parent households (chiefly as a result of the increased divorce rate) obviously can explain some, but not a large, part of the growth of delinquency. It is the growth of delinquency in all geographical areas and social groups that is difficult to explain.[11]

Comparative studies of the early childhood backgrounds of delinquents, compared with other youth, indicate that both "hard" and "mild" methods of child rearing, especially the latter, yield good results in terms of character building, provided they are applied consistently. On the other hand, erratic behavior by the parents often leads to unhappiness of the child, followed by delinquency. But can this explain the growth of delinquency through five decades? Why should parents have become more erratic and inconsistent than in earlier times?

In fact, there has been a shift, largely during the decades since World War I, away from the notion that beating one's children for disobedience was a God-given order, toward a society in which parents believe that they should be mild and understanding. Few deplore the disappearance of the former use of the stick, but we may speculate that the change has been accompanied by a high degree of uncertainty among parents, or differences of opinion between them, resulting in an inconsistency of

[11] Studies of juvenile delinquency in Sweden have been summarized in publications of the Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ).

treatment that creates anxiety on the part of the children. One may hope that there will be a change for the better when the mild educational methods have been accepted as firmly as the old methods once were.

On the other hand, a study of *Anxiety in the Nordic Countries* (Kaija, 1975) used the responses to ten questions to develop an "anxiety index" for Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. In this and other related studies, the Swedes came out as the people least harassed by anxiety and related psychosomatic symptoms. Youth, however, were somewhat happier in Norway than in Sweden. If there is a cause-and-effect relation between mental unhappiness and criminal behavior, one might have expected Sweden to rank low in crime rates as well. Actually, it is far above its neighbors.

The overwhelming majority of young delinquents are not sent to prison. Particularly in the cases of those under age 18, the prosecuting attorneys observe a law of 1964 that permits abstention from prosecution of youth in this age group after the cases have been investigated. Of some 10,000 known delinquents in the 15- to 17-age group in 1976, only 22 went to prison and 200 were put on probation under supervision. Nearly 5,000 were referred to child welfare boards, which either placed them in special schools for delinquents or placed them under the supervision of probation officers, or in some cases simply gave a warning or had a talk with the parents. The number being sent to special schools has been declining, and recently has amounted to only a few hundred a year. In fact, the child welfare boards have begun to be criticized by criminologists for their passivity, which seems to be even greater toward youngsters below the age of 15.

Some of the special schools for delinquents and other problem children have been designed as deliberate experiments with various methods aimed at "breaking away from the social heritage" (problem families breeding children who create new problem families). The results have been rather mixed. A main conclusion seems to be that one must try to work with the problems of the entire family, not just with the problem child. On a broad scale, this would demand large resources in the form of psychotherapists, social workers, and teachers. A more common

reaction of society continues to be to place the problem child in a milieu distant from the origin of the trouble—in foster families or in special schools that are far from large cities. An intermediate institution between the schools and the prisons in the past was called youth imprisonment. The delinquent was not sentenced to a fixed term, but until he seemed to have shown positive improvement. This type of institution, too, has gradually been abandoned.

How society will cope with these problems in the future is difficult to foresee. Despite some reduction in recent years, it seems probable that crime will continue to increase in the long run if we do not find more satisfactory solutions. At any rate, Swedish policy makers are certain that increased repression through the police and prisons cannot be the answer. The introduction of more lenient treatment cannot explain the upsurge of crime, because this upsurge was evident long before the shift to the present leniency. It became clear that prisons and other correctional institutions did not help, but rather functioned as "schools for thiefs." Now they also function as centers for drug contamination, which makes the authorities even more reluctant to expose young people to their influence.

The general trend is rather to reinforce the probation officer and the foster parent system. Another line of action is to develop detoxication programs for those who have become real addicts, but the capacity for rehabilitation activities is as yet deficient in relation to the need. There is also a lively debate between those who believe in compulsion for this purpose and those who do not. One experimental compromise line is to use authoritarian methods of detoxication and rehabilitation, once a person has recognized his situation and asks for help. Another school of thought (a minority) favors methadone treatment, at least for heroin addicts. But the whole issue is unsettled.

In other respects, however, action to combat juvenile delinquency is underway. Police forces have been somewhat increased, especially in order to combat the trade in drugs, but also to increase the rate of discovery of all sorts of culprits.

Much debated is the "law on temporary custody" of 1973, which gives the police greater authority to act against public disturbances for preventive purposes. (Drunkenness in public places, however, has not been a punishable offense since 1976.) The intention of the law was to combine police actions with more cooperation with social welfare agencies, but this cooperation, insofar as it has been achieved, does not seem to be very important, since those affected are usually already in contact with the social welfare agencies.

It is felt that the fight against delinquency must be associated, to a large extent, with a struggle against the mentally destructive poisons. In 1977 Parliament passed new legislation on alcohol policy, which included, among other things, prohibition of a type of medium-strength beer, which had been a tempting introduction to the use of alcohol among the young. Additional tightening of the policies against the use of both alcohol and narcotics was announced by the government in 1979, involving stricter rules for punitive action against illicit sales of alcohol to young people under age 18, who have no right to buy in the specialized alcoholic beverage shops, and against the traffic in drugs. The policy of high taxation of alcoholic beverages also continues, with the aim of keeping the tax as high as appears possible without increasing the risk of encouraging illegal distilling. Financial support for organizations cooperating in the fight against misuse of alcohol is to be increased, and more information about alcohol and other poisons is to be spread through the schools. (Pupils now seem to be clear about the dangers of drugs and thinner, the use of which has therefore declined, but they are much less clear about the effects of alcohol.)

Some politicians have begun to respond to the public's reaction to the growth of crime by demanding a return to harsher punishment policies, perhaps in the belief that a "silent majority" favors such a policy. Some moves in this direction have already been made, as we have seen. A recent public opinion poll, however, which was concerned with the question of how

to minimize the risk of theft, indicated that only three percent of the respondents suggested more police and harsher punishment, while the vast majority favored such measures as better protection of apartments and buildings.

Pessimists fear that the antisocial phenomena observed among some young people represent only the tip of a much bigger iceberg—a general decline in respect for societal values, such as the "Protestant work ethic" and simple honesty, not just among the young, but among adults as well. Adults are more likely than young people to engage in "white-collar crimes," which are often not detected. Undeniably there is social class discrimination in the more frequent prosecution of working class crimes, such as theft (at least among adults), compared with the more sophisticated manipulations known as "economic criminality." Only recently has the latter type of crime begun to receive serious attention from the law-enforcement authorities. It is not easy to preach morality to the small thieves when the big ones go free, and so there is not much done about the former ones either, at least in the case of the young. It is conceivable that the war cry about "law and order" in Sweden might lead to a healthy preoccupation with morality and immorality in society at large, rather than helpless moralizing and potentially counterproductive repression concentrated on juvenile delinquents.

There are other lines of counterattack that are being emphasized, including increased support for the expanding activities of the large folk organizations for sports and free studies. Some new civic organizations are specifically directing their attention and activities to problem groups, and are cooperating with those social workers who oppose "compulsion in social work" (for example, against alcoholics and drug addicts). A debate on this issue was conducted during the preparation of a recent reform of social assistance and related aspects of welfare policy. "The establishment," working slowly through traditional government agencies, has not yet made much progress toward more direct actions against the destructive tendencies among the young—those that begin with boredom and lack of motivation in school

and then proceed to early use of alcohol, which tends to lead to drug addiction and delinquency or disability.

There is, however, a general determi[illegible]on to develop new educational policies, with a view to ma[illegible]hools more acceptable, more interesting, and more relevai[illegible]. Some of the experiments tried under the preparation of the new law on "the schools' inner work" appear promising as guidelines for this type of reform. (See pp. 126 ff.)

The recently enacted obligation of school and other local authorities to maintain contact for two additional years with all those who leave compulsory school at the age of 16 should also have some favorable results. This is a matter of implementing the so-called youth guarantee—that society should offer every young person either work or training related to his or her capacity. The purpose of these reforms, of course, is not directed solely to counteracting delinquency. Improved education and full employment are goals in their own right, but the problems are clearly interrelated.

The Positive Developments

We should beware of becoming "backwater watchers." If we concentrate all our attention on the spurious backward movements in the water nearest to the bank of a river, we may overlook the direction of the mainstream. Thus, I need, in concluding this chapter, to return to the more positive aspects indicated in the introduction.

The most important of these is the strong use by the young of the enlarged facilities in the ordinary schools above the compulsory level. Enrollment rates in both secondary and higher education are several times higher than they were 20 or 30 years ago. I will return to this in Chapter 3.

In addition, there are many young people taking part in adult education, in order to compensate for deficiencies in their basic schooling or to acquire knowledge above that level so as to participate more effectively in civic, cultural, or working life. Municipal adult education at lower and upper secondary school levels—largely created as a new institution in 1968—now enrolls

nearly 300,000 participants, a good many of whom are below age 25. The folk high schools and trade union schools each enroll annually about 150,000 in courses of varying lengths. This is several times more than in the 1960s.[12]

The interest parents take in the education their children get in the schools is manifested by 1,700 local "home-and-school" associations, with about 1 million members—also a rapidly growing activity. Moreover, the use of public libraries is growing, despite the competition of TV in practically every home and a proliferation of vulgar-violent and porno-comic magazines in the last two decades.

Membership in sport clubs has also been growing rapidly, having roughly doubled in the last 20 years and now amounting to about 3 million, of whom one-half are registered as active and nearly two-thirds are under age 25. Sweden's decline in prowess at Olympic games, from having once been in competition with the United States for number one to a typical small-country score, may appear to refute this evidence of the vitality of Swedish youth. Even if not untouched by the international tendency to strive for elitism, Sweden has chosen not to enter too vigorously into the race of scientific "chicken-breeding" in this field and has made particular efforts to broaden participation in sports. Many annual sports events of long standing have become mass performances in such activities as cross-country running, "orienteering," marching, bicycling, and skiing. This development from elite to mass activities may be illustrated by the increased participation in the *great event* of Swedish mass sports, the Vasa-run: Over 17,000 people now show up for this 55-mile ski race compared with 400 in 1950 and 40 in 1935. Professional sports are very limited, but workmates' clubs are becoming a widespread movement for sports practiced by

[12]The free adult education organizations have nearly 3 million participants in study circles, that is, nearly a tripling since 1960. About 15 percent are below age 25. Although these figures involve double-counting of persons who participate in more than one course or study circle, the pronounced growth indicates the opposite of a passive attitude toward vocational, civic, and intellectual matters.

everybody. In 1978, there were 22 million participation cases, of which probably one-third were below the age of 25.[13]

Numerous cultural and hobby clubs, Boy Scouts, etc., seem to grow. But their absolute membership is still at a lower level than that of the large political, religious, and temperance organizations of youth, despite the decline of the latter—in turn of much smaller size than the organizations for sports and free studies.

It is somewhat difficult to ascertain the size of many new organizations and groups, mainly with young membership, that have been formed around issues that have attracted attention only recently or that have otherwise cut across traditional political demarcation lines: environment and consumer protection, mental health and reform of criminal policy; help to drug addicts, alcoholics, and prisoners; internationalism; and militancy on local issues by local citizens' groups ("village teams" in large cities and small towns alike). Their instability makes it difficult to prognosticate their future. From a historical perspective, we know that organizations that are now well established had to live through long gestation periods before achieving strength. We do not yet know whether any of these new organizations, or which of them, will survive and lead to any important reshuffling of the political and cultural alignments and power structures. Most recently (1978–1980), it seems to be the Conservative and the Communist parties who are profiting from the anti-Establishment mood among some of the young.

Although it is likely, as suggested earlier, that the existing political parties and folk organizations will be able to adapt themselves to the emerging situation, we cannot be certain about this.

As we saw earlier, also, there is high male acceptance of female emancipation among young people. Swedish youth seems also to combine conformity with parental values with nonsubservience to authority and in freedom from social prejudice.

[13]Information provided by the State Youth Council and the National Sports Federation.

The very fact of discipline problems in the schools, apart from its roots in school deficiencies that are now recognized enough to give rise to important reforms, is also to some extent a side effect of the trend away from authoritarianism and toward a more democratic spirit in the relations between old and young, employers and employees, teachers and pupils, intellectuals and blue-collar workers, that has occurred in Sweden.

Concluding Comments

Noting both the positive and negative aspects of changes among Swedish youth, we may comment as follows, at the same time indicating the roots of the changes in the fundamental development of the country's economic and social structure.

The rapid growth of income and leisure have created opportunities for conspicuous consumption and free-time activities among the young, somewhat foreign to their parents, especially when the latter are expected to finance them. The increased membership in both free study and sports organizations can largely be explained as resulting from the same causes; the increased consumption (and ensuing misuse) of alcohol has followed the same income and consumption curve; and a country with high income levels naturally becomes a target for parasites, like the drug smugglers, as well as more legal exploiters of the purchasing power of youth.

The rapidly advancing level of educational attainment—another result of increased family income and the capacity of society to offer school facilities—has led not only to new career possibilities but also to expectations that are not always consistent with the labor market situation and that sometimes lead, therefore, to animosity against the existing establishment. The rise of the compulsory school-leaving age and the great expansion of secondary schools have greatly increased the proportion of young people who are kept in a socially dependent situation for long periods after attainment of physical and psychological adolescence. Moreover, many of them do not have the incentive toward obedience that existed when teenage pupils knew that their long schooling would make them a privileged minority

group. This helps to explain the emergence of discipline problems, but an additional explanation may be the fact that middle-class teachers now have to cope with more working-class pupils at a not-so-docile age.

Improved nutrition has lowered the age of puberty, and this, together with improved contraceptives under female control, has influenced patterns of sexual activity in the direction one might expect. The breakthrough for TV and the lowered real costs of travel may explain increased interest in world affairs and environmental protection matters, but the generalized access to TV also explains some of the difficulties facing the schools in competing for the interest of pupils. Perhaps it also explains some of the more spectacular actions on behalf of more or less worthy causes that are treated as "news" on TV more than everyday work in established organizations.

Decline of militancy and discipline among young members in old organizations like trade unions and cooperatives is a rather natural result of the fact that these organizations now exist as well-established administrative entities, no longer needing the struggles on picket lines and organization campaigns that were necessary in a once-hostile world.

The concentration of population in large cities has increased freedom of choice of education, occupation, and lifestyle, at the same time reducing social control by neighbors and relatives. This can be seen as a liberation from village conformism and prejudice, but also as a breeding ground for antisocial behavior.

With its Lutheran State Church, Sweden is probably the most secularized country in "ex-Christianity," including countries without a state church, in which religion's grip over some souls has been conserved either by persecution and martyrdom or by free competition among all sorts of churches. This observation is confirmed by the Japanese government's study of youth in 11 countries. Swedish youth registered the highest percentage "without religion" among all countries except Japan. Some observers ascribe to this secularization the pathological fringe phenomena among those who are not strong enough for

modern Swedish freedom. Others put the blame, as we have seen, on the "lack of firm norms and rules in education" from baby years to maturity, without necessarily recommending religion as an alternative.

No thesis is more repeated today in writings about education in homes and schools than this: tolerance, democracy, and anti-authoritarianism do not mean normlessness; parents should not hesitate to tell children firmly what is tolerable and what is not in their behavior both inside and outside the home. There is, however, no question of any retreat to old methods of establishing parental authority. Witness the new act of 1979, making corporal punishment of children illegal for parents, as it was declared long ago for schoolteachers. Firmness should be interpreted as consistency, but not as violence.

Among youth in the adolescent stage, there is little sign of anything that could be called a generalized counterculture. The goals of the overwhelming majority of young people are to follow in the footsteps of their parents—forming a family, acquiring an apartment or house, or at least a summer cottage and a car, improving one's economic situation through education, training, and work, and participating in some cases in organizations created largely for economic purposes, such as political parties, trade unions, consumer cooperatives, and farmers', tenants', and employer's organizations, or sometimes in new organizations. Undoubtedly, peer groups compete with parents as norm-builders, but if the peers also get their deeper attitudes from their parents, the risk of generational conflicts remains limited.

All of this can be judged positively as a sign of stability and harmony—confirmed by the low "anxiety index" mentioned earlier. It can also be judged as a sign that the old capitalist-bourgeois values have been preserved, despite the struggle of the leading political movement for an egalitarian society of mutual solidarity to be dominated by more human values than those of economic status. On the other hand, it is clear that the reduction of economic and social inequalities has gone rather far and that this has been accepted as a fact of life in Sweden. There is a backlash in the form of an increased number of young people

voting for the Conservatives, and we have also seen some increase of ecological antigrowth radicalism, but this tendency toward polarization among the young is still of limited scope.

As for the negative phenomena among the alienated minorities, one may optimistically see them as temporary backwater effects of a largely positive development toward increased freedom and tolerance among those—the majority—who are strong enough to "bear freedom properly," in the words of an often-quoted medieval Swedish poet. It then behooves those who have this strength to find ways of helping their weaker brethren avoid self-destructive paths and become members of this freer democracy instead of sabotaging or misusing it. The difficulties of this struggle are not seen as reasons for a retreat to old authoritarian methods, but as a challenge to develop better methods of education and socialization in schools and in families, and in places for work and leisure. It is in this way that we can interpret the ideologies and intentions of those who are deciding about Swedish youth policy, with some—although limited—differences between changing governments.

2

Youth Employment and Unemployment

Trends in employment and unemployment among Swedish youth in recent decades have been determined by several factors: (1) variations in economic activity, relatively mild and mitigated by a forceful labor market policy; (2) a series of structural changes that have gradually increased the persistent differences between unemployment rates of youth (especially those under age 20) and adults; and (3) the pronounced expansion and reforms of secondary schools and institutions of higher education.

In order to give a general background to the more detailed material presented in the text, Table 5 shows broad data about the Swedish population, Gross National Product, distribution of the labor force, et cetera.[1]

During the postwar period, total population has grown slowly, but there have been several "bulges" in the size of the youthful population—in the early 1960s, reflecting the high birthrate right after World War I, and the bulge beginning now in the early 1980s, reflecting a second rise in the birthrate in

[1] The Swedish monthly labor force sample survey (AKU), which is frequently cited in our discussion, is deliberately patterned on the American model to facilitate international comparisons.

[2] See Gordon, with Trow (1979, pp. 18–19), for annual birthrate data for selected countries.

the early 1960s.[2] Between 1963 and 1977, the population aged 15 to 19 fell about 17 percent. This will be followed by a new increase of nearly 10 percent by 1985 (Figure 1). For the 20- to 24-age group, the changes follow five years later.

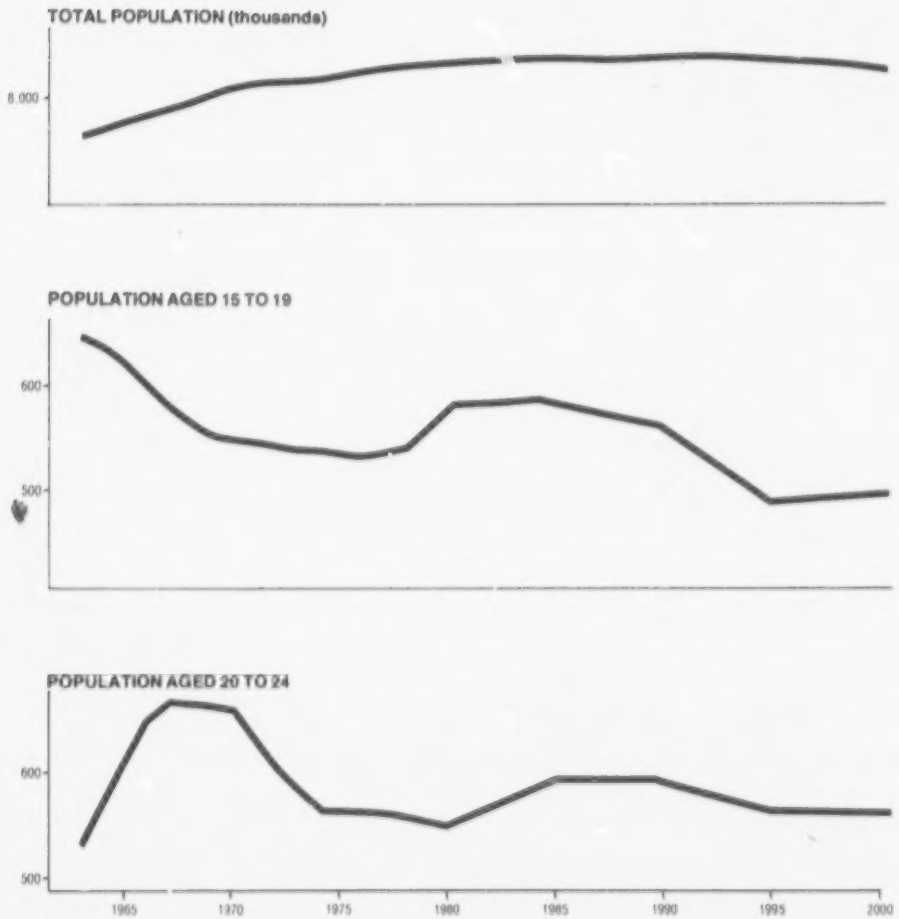
The overall labor force participation rate (total employed and unemployed persons as a percentage of the total population 16–74 years of age) has displayed an upward trend, despite the rising percentage of young people who are not in the labor force because they are in school or college. The rate reached 71 percent in 1979 (80.5 percent if limited to the 16- to 64-age bracket)—the highest rate among the Organization for Economic

Table 5. Selected statistics on the Swedish population and the labor force, 1978 (rounded figures)

Population (in thousands)	8.300
Aged 16 to 19	431
Aged 20 to 24	565
Labor force (16 to 74; in thousands)	4.300
Primary sector (agriculture, etc.)	250
Secondary sector (manufacturing, construction, etc.)	1.550
Commerce, communications, banking, etc.	1.200
Public service and administration	1.300
Earnings per hour in manufacturing (before taxes)	$7.00
Total labor cost per hour (earnings, vacation pay, payroll taxes, and fees)	$9.50
Gross National Product (in $ billions)	$100.0
Public expenditures, total (in $ billions)	55.0
Education, total	8.0
Compulsory	4.5
Secondary schools	1.5
Universities and colleges	1.0
Adult education	0.5
Labor market programs, total (in $ billions)	3.0
Labor market training	1.0
Relief work and other job creation	1.3
Employment services and mobility promotions	0.2
Unemployment insurance, etc.	0.3

Source: Statistical Abstract of Sweden (Statistisk årsbok), 1979.

Figure 1. Changes in the total population and the youthful population of Sweden, actual 1963 to 1978, and projected 1978 to 2000



Sources: SCB, *Folkmängdens förändringer åren, 1963–66* (Population Changes); D:o part 3, åren 1967–78; *Befolkningsprognos för hela riket* (Population projections for the whole country) *1978–2000;* in the series, *Information i prognosfrågor* (Information about projections), 1978.

Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Its growth reflects the rising participation of women in employment, especially on a part-time basis—nearly one-half of the employed women are now in part-time employment.

The high labor force participation rate for both men and women also reflects the fact that the lively demand for labor during most of the postwar period has attracted workers into the labor force. "Latent unemployment" has gone down and the former "hidden unemployed" have appeared in the labor market, either obtaining jobs or registering as unemployed. In recent years, however, the male labor force participation rate has resumed its long-term downward trend in the older age brackets, reflecting a lowering of the normal retirement age, higher pensions, easier access to early pensions, and also a "squeezing out" of persons with relatively low work capacity, not only among older persons, but also among the young.

During the 1960s a decline occurred in the labor force participation rates of young persons (except for women aged 20 to 24) (see Tables 6, 7, and 8). This decline was attributable to in-

Table 6. Activity status of youth population, annual averages, 1963 to 1979 (percentages of total population in each age group, except last col.)

	Employed	*Unemployed*	*Students*[a]	*Others*[b]	*Unemployed as percentage of labor force*
			Persons aged 16–19		
1963	58.8%	2.3%	26.9%	12.0%	3.8%
1964	57.8	2.7	28.0	11.5	4.4
1965	57.9	1.7	28.2	12.2	2.9
1966	54.8	2.1	30.4	12.7	3.7
1967	49.7	2.7	33.7	13.9	5.2
1968	51.5	3.1	32.8	12.6	5.7
1969	50.0	2.4	35.6	12.0	4.6
1970	49.6	2.2	38.4	9.8	4.3
1971	48.7	4.1	36.3	10.9	7.7
1972	47.7	4.3	36.4	11.6	8.2
1973	48.2	3.5	37.2	11.1	6.8
1974	51.6	3.6	32.7	12.1	6.6
1975	54.4	3.2	32.7	9.7	5.5
1976	55.3	3.2	31.5	10.0	5.5
1977	52.6	3.8	33.9	9.7	6.7
1978	50.9	4.4	35.1	9.6	7.9
1979	52.2	4.2	33.6	10.0	7.4

(continued on next page)

Table 6. Activity status of youth population, annual averages, 1963 to 1979 (percentages of total population in each age group, except last col.) *(continued)*

	Employed	*Unemployed*	*Students*[a]	*Others*[b]	*Unemployed as percentage of labor force*
	Persons aged 20-24				
1963	71.6%	1.6%	8.3%	18.5%	2.2%
1964	72.0	1.5	8.5	18.0	2.0
1965	70.5	1.4	8.9	19.2	1.9
1966	70.4	1.6	9.1	18.9	2.2
1967	68.2	2.3	11.4	18.1	3.2
1968	68.7	2.1	11.7	17.5	3.0
1969	69.2	2.0	11.4	17.4	2.8
1970	69.5	1.6	12.8	16.1	2.2
1971	68.4	2.6	13.0	16.0	3.7
1972	69.2	3.3	11.9	15.6	4.5
1973	69.8	3.3	12.0	14.9	4.4
1974	73.5	2.5	10.5	13.5	3.2
1975	76.1	2.2	9.9	11.8	2.8
1976	77.2	2.2	9.2	11.4	2.7
1977	77.7	2.6	9.4	10.7	3.2
1978	76.8	3.4	9.9	9.9	4.3
1979	78.7	3.0	8.9	9.2	3.7

[a]Full-time students only; those with a job, part-time or full-time, are included among the employed. Therefore, these figures strongly underrepresent participation in secondary and higher education.

[b]Includes men in military service, women at work in the home, and students outside of the labor force on a long vacation.

Source: AKU, Labor Force Sample Surveys.

creasing enrollment in postcompulsory schools. Then the percentages of young people who were students declined in the early 1970s, but recently it has been rising again. The labor force participation rate tended to rise throughout most of the decade, largely because students were increasingly adopting a pattern of combining school and work, either by working and studying at the same time or by shifting back and forth between enrollment and work.

Those who work and study at the same time are counted as employed in the labor force statistics, whereas those who are full-time students are counted as outside the labor force. In 1978, 35 percent of the population in the 16- to 19-age group

Table 7. Activity status of men aged 16 to 19 and 20 to 24, 1963 to 1979

	In labor force	*Not in labor force*				*Latent jobseekers as percentage of population*[b]		*Unemployed as percentage of labor force*
		Total	*Students*[a]	*Military service*	*Others*			
	Men aged 16 to 19							
1963	62.5%	37.5%	27.0%	4.4%	6.2%	n.a.		2.9%
1965	62.2	37.8	27.5	3.6	6.8	n.a.		1.9
1970	52.8	47.2	37.2	1.5	8.5	1.7%		3.4
1971	53.7	46.3	37.3	1.6	7.5	2.4		7.1
1972	53.5	46.5	35.9	2.5	8.1	2.4		7.8
1973	53.7	46.3	36.1	2.5	7.7	2.0		5.8
1974	57.1	42.9	31.9	3.2	7.8	2.0		5.2
1975	59.0	41.0	32.1	2.8	6.1	2.1	1.3	4.2
1976	59.5	40.5	31.1	2.7	6.7		1.3	4.1
1977	56.7	43.3	33.8	3.2	6.3		1.8	5.4
1978	55.0	45.0	34.9	3.6	6.5		2.3	7.1
1979	56.4	43.6	33.2	3.5	6.9		2.7	7.0
	Men aged 20 to 24							
1963	81.2%	18.8%	9.6%	5.8%	3.4%	n.a.		2.1%
1965	79.7	20.3	10.3	6.4	3.5	n.a.		1.2
1970	77.1	22.9	12.2	6.6	4.1	0.7%		2.5
1971	76.0	24.0	13.2	6.9	3.9	0.7		3.7
1972	76.6	23.4	12.3	6.7	4.4	0.8		4.2
1973	78.4	21.6	11.8	5.7	4.1	0.6		4.2
1974	80.7	19.3	10.4	5.2	3.7	0.5		2.7
1975	82.7	17.3	9.3	4.9	3.1	0.6	0.4	2.1
1976	83.2	16.8	9.0	4.0	3.8		0.4	2.2
1977	83.4	16.6	9.0	4.0	3.6		0.3	2.9
1978	82.9	17.1	9.7	3.9	3.5		0.5	4.3
1979	83.7	16.3	8.4	4.1	3.7		0.4	3.6

[a]See note a, Table 6.

[b]Different definitions 1970–75 and 1975–79.

Source: AKU, Labor Force Sample Surveys.

and 10 percent in the 20- to 24-age group were students under these definitions (Table 9). However, education statistics for the same year showed 55 and 23 percent, respectively, enrolled as

Table 8. Activity status of women aged 16 to 19 and 20 to 24, 1963 to 1979

	In labor force	*Not in labor force*				*Latent jobseekers as percentage of population*[b]		*Unemployed as percentage of labor force*
		Total	*Students*[a]	*Home work*	*Others*			
	Women aged 16 to 19							
1963	59.6%	40.4%	26.8%	5.9%	7.7%	n.a.		4.7%
1965	50.7	49.3	29.0	6.4	7.6	n.a.		5.1
1970	50.9	49.1	35.1	4.1	9.9	3.0%		4.8
1971	51.9	48.1	35.3	4.5	8.3	3.5		8.4
1972	50.4	49.6	37.0	4.2	8.4	3.0		8.7
1973	49.8	50.2	38.4	3.5	8.3	2.5		8.0
1974	53.4	46.6	33.6	3.4	9.6	2.5		8.1
1975	56.2	43.8	33.4	3.0	7.4	2.5	1.8	7.1
1976	57.4	42.6	31.9	3.2	7.5		1.8	7.0
1977	56.1	43.9	34.1	2.3	7.5		1.6	8.1
1978	55.5	44.5	35.3	2.1	7.1		2.3	8.7
1979	56.5	43.5	34.0	1.7	7.8		2.0	7.9
	Women aged 20 to 24							
1963	64.9%	35.1%	7.0%	25.5%	2.7%	n.a.		2.3%
1965	63.6	36.4	7.4	25.5	3.4	n.a.		2.9
1970	64.3	35.7	12.1	19.1	4.5	3.0%		2.4
1971	65.8	34.2	12.8	17.1	4.3	3.3		3.8
1972	68.0	32.0	11.6	16.0	4.4	2.7		4.9
1973	67.6	32.4	12.2	16.2	4.0	2.6		4.7
1974	71.1	28.9	10.6	14.7	3.6	2.2		3.8
1975	73.7	26.3	10.4	13.3	2.6	1.9	1.1	3.5
1976	75.5	24.5	9.4	12.4	2.7		0.7	3.4
1977	77.1	22.9	9.7	10.2	3.0		0.8	3.5
1978	77.6	22.4	10.1	8.9	3.4		0.8	4.3
1979	79.9	20.1	9.4	7.4	3.3		0.6	3.8

[a]See note a, Table 6.

[b]See note b, Table 7.

Source: AKU, Labor Force Sample Surveys.

Table 9. Percentage distribution of young people by labor force status and enrollment in school or college, by age group, 1978

	Age group					
Labor force and school status	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*16–19*	*20–24*
Population (thousands)	108.6	106.3	104.3	107.6	420.8	557.6
Labor force statistics (percentage of population)						
In labor force	34.5	46.6	67.3	73.4	55.3	80.3
Employed	31.5	42.0	62.4	68.7	50.9	76.8
Unemployed	3.3	4.6	4.9	4.3	4.4	3.4
Not in labor force	65.5	53.4	32.7	26.6	44.7	19.7
Students					35.1	9.9
Others					7.8	9.8
School statistics (percentage of population)						
Students	84.0	72.3	41.5	22.7	55.3	22.6
Compulsory schools (1975)[a]	5.0	0.9	0.8	0.6	1.8	0.2
Secondary schools	77.9	69.9	35.0	10.9	48.3	2.9
Universities, etc.	0.0	0.1	0.8	4.4	1.3	9.1
Other institutions	1.1	2.2	4.9	6.8	3.9	10.4
Not enrolled	15.5	27.7	58.5	77.3	44.7	77.4

[a]This line is an approximation, based on 1975 data, because figures for age dispersion of pupils in the basic schools no longer are available. Also included are those in special schools for the handicapped, etc.

Source: SCB: AKU (Labor Force Sample Surveys); Statistical report U 1979:28 *Students in Noncompulsory Schools.*

students. The differences of 20 and 13 percent, respectively, indicate the frequency of part-time work among students (and also part-time studies), although there are other sources of differences in the two sets of statistics.

The pronounced reduction in the percentage of women outside the labor force in the 20- to 24-age group reflects the shift from work at home to work in the market on the part of both young mothers and other young women (Table 8).

Throughout the period covered by our data, unemployment rates of young people have been higher than those of adults (Table 10). During the 1960s, the ratio of the unemployment rate of youth to that of the total labor force was rather constant, around 2.5 to 1 for the 16- to 19-age group and 1.4 to 1 for those aged 10 to 14, but in the 1970s it has gradually grown so as to reach 3.5 to 1 for the younger age group and 1.8 to 1 for those aged 20 to 24 in 1979.

Table 10. Ratio of youth unemployment rate to unemployment rate for total labor force

	16-19	*20-24*	*16-24*
1963	2.2	1.3	1.7
1964	2.8	1.3	1.9
1965	2.4	1.6	1.9
1966	2.3	1.4	1.7
1967	2.5	1.5	1.9
1968	2.6	1.4	1.8
1969	2.4	1.5	1.8
1970	2.9	1.5	1.9
1971	3.1	1.5	2.0
1972	3.0	1.7	2.1
1973	2.7	1.8	2.1
1974	3.3	1.6	2.2
1975	3.4	1.8	2.4
1976	3.4	1.7	2.3
1977	3.4	1.6	2.2
1978	3.6	2.0	2.5
1979	3.5	1.8	2.4

The unemployment rate in the 16- to 19-age group grew from 4 percent in 1976 to 7 percent in 1978 for boys and from 7 percent to 9 percent for girls. Among those aged 20 to 24, the rates have increased from 2.2 to 4.3 percent for men and from 3.4 to 4.3 percent for women. The overall rate for the entire labor force (aged 16 to 74) was held down to 1.6 percent in 1974 to 1976 but rose to 2.2 percent in 1978, a year when unemployment among the young was nearly as high as at the

previous peak (1972). In early 1978 and 1979, however, a new decline in unemployment got under way, particularly for the young. (See tables 6-8.)

In connection with the level and changes in unemployment among the young, it must be kept in mind that their unemployment rates are computed on the basis of a reduced proportion of the total population in the age group—only those who are in the labor force.[3]

If the unemployment rate were expressed as a percentage of the total population in the respective age groups, youth unemployment would appear as about one-half of the usually published figure for teenagers, but it would be about four-fifths for the 25- to 64-age group.

Interpreting the increase in the youth differential, we must recognize that it reflects the results of two conflicting influences: the decline in demand for young workers in the economy and the actions taken by the government to counteract this through special programs of job creation and other accommodations in training and education.

At times in public debates, the "real rate of unemployment" is presented as consisting of those officially counted as unemployed plus those who have been saved from unemployment through government actions—a terminology that does not seem logical. This should not, however, prevent us from analyzing all of the factors involved. Many of the young people who have been placed in temporary relief work or in labor market training courses consider their situation ambiguous and uncertain. Yet this can also be the case for those who are in ordinary schools or in "normal" work.

For reasons that are different and more defensible than the one just mentioned, it must be stressed that the real rate of

[3] Although the labor force data have been modeled on the American pattern, unemployment rates for the young in Sweden would probably be a few tenths of one percent higher if comparability were perfect, because full-time students who seek but fail to get part-time work are counted as unemployed in the United States, but as persons outside the labor force in Sweden.

unemployment is considerably higher than the official rate. There is a certain fringe of "latent jobseekers," namely, those "discouraged workers" who respond in the affirmative to the question of whether they would be seeking work if they believed this to be worthwhile. The precise method of asking and defining the concept was changed in 1975, but, if we calculate backward on the basis of the present-day definition of latent jobseekers ("persons not in the labor force, willing and able to take up employment"), we find the following: Among the teenagers this hidden reserve was as large as about two-thirds of the registered unemployment in 1970; since then the latter has nearly doubled to 4.2 percent of the whole population in that age group (1979), but the latent jobseekers have grown fewer, now down to about one-half as many as those registered. In the 20- to 24-age group as well, the number of latent jobseekers was two-thirds of that for official unemployment in 1970, but this number decreased to one-sixth by 1979. It should also be noted that many latent jobseekers want part-time work; of these, two-thirds are students under 25.

If we combine the 1979 figures for officially registered unemployed and for others willing and able to work, we arrive at a rate of 11 percent of the teenage labor force out of work instead of the official 7.4 percent. In the 20- to 24-age group, the figures would be 4.3 versus 3.7 percent. For the total labor force, we would get 3.2 instead of 2.1 percent.

These rates should not be taken to express the "real unemployment rate" in any precise way. There are those among the employed who also would like to work more hours; on the other hand there are even more who would like to work shorter hours, perhaps also some who could be called voluntarily unemployed, implying a motive for adjusting the "real" rate in the other direction. More important is it that the figures for "other" in the labor force statistics indicate that many more people could be regarded as belonging to a potential labor force even though they do not declare immediate willingness to take up employment. The declining trend of this group, latent jobseekers and others, implies that more of the potential labor force has now come and continues to come out into the open. Most

of these persons have moved into employment, but some of them have increased the official unemployment figures. Thus, they may have intensified the increase in the youth unemployment rate. Nevertheless, it is clear that there has been an actual increase of a few percent in the teenage unemployment rate in relation to the general trend for the total population in the 16- to 74-age group. The relative increase of the 20- to 24-age group, on the other hand, appears to be slight or nonexistent.

These observations explain the increased attention paid to teenage unemployment by the public and the government. Among the teenage unemployed, the early school-leavers are particularly numerous. During the early 1970s, more than 30 percent of each cohort leaving compulsory school at age 16 did not continue directly into secondary school. By 1979, the figure had gone down to 25 percent of the 16 cohort. But older entrants made the total higher than one single cohort.

Another category with particularly high unemployment rates consists of the children of foreign workers, who often have not acquired an adequate knowledge of Swedish. Their unemployment rate is about twice as high as that of Swedish youth.

As in other countries, the higher level of youth unemployment is partly attributable to the normal situation facing persons entering the labor force for the first time. It takes time to locate a job, and frequently the first job a young person gets is of short duration, or they deliberately shop around before they find a job they want to keep.

Each spell of youth unemployment is, on the average, shorter than that of adults (Table 11). In view of the higher measured volume of unemployment for the young, the figures imply that there are 8 to 10 times as many spells of unemployment among those aged 16 to 19 and about twice as many among those aged 20 to 24 as among those aged 25 to 54. The monthly "inflow into unemployment," either from those previously employed or from those outside the labor force, has been estimated to be about 1.5 and 1.0 percent, respectively, in the two youngest groups, compared with 0.4 percent in the 25- to 54-age group (Table 12). In view of the limited change in

total unemployment, this means that the number of job placements each month is also much higher among the young than among adults.

Table 11. Average duration of unemployment in weeks, by age, 1971, 1973, 1976, and 1979[a]

Age	*1971*	*1973*	*1976*	*1979*
16–19	9.2	10.2	9.5	9.4
20–24	8.9	12.9	10.6	11.7
25–34	10.9	14.9	13.3	16.1
35–44	12.1	14.1	13.7	15.9
45–54	14.4	18.6	19.9	21.4
55–64	20.8	27.7	26.1	32.9
16–64	12.4	16.0	14.6	18.7
16–74	13.5	16.7	15.2	16.8

[a]Number of weeks of unemployment reported by interviewee from end of job to time of interview.

Source: AKU, Labor Force Sample Surveys.

Table 12. Monthly inflow of unemployment as a percentage of the population,[a] by age, 1971 to 1976 (annual averages)

	Age group		
	16–19	*20–24*	*25–54*
1971	1.72	1.22	0.57
1972	1.74	1.26	0.52
1973	1.52	1.19	0.47
1974	1.95	1.15	0.42
1975	1.55	0.94	0.34
1976	1.45	0.97	0.35

[a]Estimated as unemployed with length of unemployment less than four weeks.

Source: AKU, Labor Force Sample Surveys.

On the whole, it is evident that most of the young have much less difficulty in getting jobs than in keeping them. Their jobs are usually of short duration. The high unemployment rate among the young thus consists of a large number of relatively short periods of job search, except, we emphasize, in the case of the unlucky minority. It should also be emphasized that in recent years the temporary jobs held by the young have consisted to a considerable extent of special relief work placements, arranged for the specific purpose of combating unemployment. A special study of the youth labor market in 5 (and to some extent in 24) cities and towns, to be discussed more fully later, indicates that the most frequent reason for termination of a job among teenagers was that the job was temporary to begin with (including summer vacation jobs). Perhaps in one-fourth or one-third of the cases, termination occurred because either the employer or the youngster or both became dissatisfied. Other, but less frequent, reasons were going back to school or taking another job.

We have already referred to the well-known fact that, in all countries, unemployment tends to be concentrated on those with the least educational attainment. This is generally true, in spite of the fears of unemployment among university graduates about the alleged overproduction of highly educated persons. The labor force survey of February 1979 revealed an unemployment rate of 2.8 percent for persons (of all ages) who had only comprehensive school or less, 2.0 percent for those who had some secondary education, and 0.8 percent for those with some postsecondary education (Table 13). The same pattern of differences prevailed for all age groups.

Surveys of employment status six months or a year after leaving schools of various levels show similar results. From time to time in the past 10 years, there has been a surplus of persons with higher education, but these situations have been of short duration and of limited scope. In view of the high expectations of graduates, even relatively short waiting periods give rise to pronounced psychological reactions, which extend down to younger people who tend to react by displaying reluctance to

Table 13. Unemployment by age and level of education February 1979

Age	*Compulsory education*	*Secondary education*	*Postsecondary education*	*Total*
Number of persons				
16–19	11,800	5,500	700	18,000
20–24	5,400	8,300	1,300	15,000
25–74	40,500	17,700	2,800	61,000
Percentage of labor force				
16–19	9.8%	6.2%	—	8.5%
20–24	4.1	3.1	2.8%	3.3
25–74	2.3	1.5	0.5	1.7
Total	2.8%	2.0%	0.8%	2.2%

Source: AKU, Feb. 1979. Extra question requested by AMS.

invest in higher education for themselves. It also came to be recognized, gradually, that graduates had to accept lower starting levels (for example, in the civil service hierarchy) than in earlier periods, when there were always good jobs waiting for the choice of the graduate.

Explanations for Rising Youth Unemployment

There are several factors behind the growth of youth unemployment: Young people have traditionally gone into manufacturing industries and other private sectors of the economy. Employment in these sectors has gone down during the last decade. As firms have applied a policy of "no dismissals," even in a slack market (because of public relations considerations, union contracts, and, more recently, legal provisions), they have also applied a policy of "no new hires" over long periods. Obviously, this hits the young people just entering the labor market, and especially those who are qualified only for simple manual or menial work.

The fact that the overall unemployment rate has been at a low level during most of the 1970s—only tenths of one percent above that of the boom of 1969–70—does not mean that the

Swedish economy has been experiencing an industrial boom. The growth of total employment has been attributable to the expansion of the service sector (particularly public services) and to deliberate job creation measures. In public service, however, entry rules often work particularly to the disadvantage of those who have no certificate or diploma or of those under 18 years of age who are not permitted to take jobs requiring night work (as in hospitals or homes for the aged).

The education explosion of the 1960s, which changed the demand-supply relationship in many occupations and professions rather rapidly toward the end of the decade, may have made the situation worse for those who had no more than compulsory school education. If there is a shortage of jobs, it is the more educated who get them, especially those of a long-term character. Even if they do not have specific skills for the jobs, employers regard them as better prospects than those with less education.

This concentration of unemployment on the less educated has often led to the conclusion that the best remedy would be to provide them with more education as soon as possible. This conclusion, however, is not necessarily valid. It could simply mean that the "underachievers" would be even more effectively identified and labeled as such and ostentatiously weeded out by employers.

The rapidly increasing supply of women in the labor market must have meant, at least to some extent, competition with young people for the simple repetitive jobs that can be started without much instruction or training. Such jobs are easily accepted by housewives without much previous work experience and with relatively short working life perspectives, and this may partly explain the widespread talk about the "disappearance of simple jobs for youth."

Wages for the young have been rising relative to those of adults ever since the 1930s. Hourly earnings in manufacturing for persons below the age of 19 rose from 43 percent of those for adult males in 1939 to 53 percent in 1960 and 67 percent in 1977. Part of this increase, however, must be due to a rise in the average age of young employees. Thus, the real reduction of

the differential must have been more limited. Differentials set forth in union contracts seem to have been rather stable, at least during most of the 1960s, when they began to be reduced, particularly for girls, in connection with the general equalization of male and female wages. Relatively pronounced reductions of the *wage rate differentials* were gradually brought about under contracts in the 1970s; this seems to have been a lagged reaction to the reduction in the *earnings differential* which occurred in the previous period, when there was a sellers' market for youth.

The reduction of the youth-adult wage differential has been part of a general reduction of wage differences that is in keeping with the traditional ideology of Swedish trade unions, but it must have contributed—to an extent that is still much in dispute—to the growth of youth unemployment. The method that has been adopted to overcome this problem has been to reduce the employers' costs of employing the young without reducing the latters' earnings, that is, to provide a subsidy for employing them. This method can actually be regarded as a reimbursement—partial or temporarily full—of payroll taxes on earnings of young employees. It may also be regarded as an equitable act because of the fact that young workers are paying—via their employers—considerable amounts for pensions without becoming entitled to earlier or higher pensions than those who start working much later because they continue their education. Young workers also contribute to current public expenditures for the student members of their own age cohorts. Similar subsidies are being used for other disadvantaged groups as well, in preference to wage differentiation that in theory would clear the market, because the relative wage reductions that would be required to provide full employment for such groups appear unacceptable.

In this connection, it should be noted that there is no minimum wage law in Sweden. Since union contracts have complete coverage, however, they have a similar function, with the qualification that wage differences among industries, as well as among age groups, are provided on the basis of different conditions in each industry.

Swedish trade unions have virtually no restrictive entrance or apprenticeship rules. The central trade union confederation

(LO) watches out for the common interests of workers as a whole and applies pressure to any union that attempts to shunt employment problems onto other and weaker unions or onto young workers by creating obstacles to entrance. The statutes of LO provide that affiliated unions must accept for membership anyone who gets a job in their area of jurisdiction. (During periods of high unemployment in the past, the unions have even arranged for unemployed youngsters to be granted a sort of "preparatory membership" even before getting a job, as a help toward introduction into the union.) Union rules on entry thus do not seem to have contributed to the explanation of the rise in youth unemployment.

There has been much talk about an alleged reluctance of young people to take jobs at all, or at least to be choosy about job offers. A number of specific studies have been made of this issue. Some job vacancies, formally described as not requiring any particular qualifications, had remained unfilled at the employment service for long periods, but, when these were more closely scrutinized, it was found that they were actually not available to the young because there were implied conditions—strength, unsound environment, specifications for experience or for an age permitting night work, but well below the age for military service—that barred the young from being considered for these jobs.

Other studies concerning the behavior of young jobseekers also have shown that the number of youths actually shunning work is very low. There are always a certain number of social or medical problem cases, but these can explain neither the level nor the growth of teenage unemployment. The despair of youngsters who have been seeking work in vain also is very apparent in the interviews. It must be noted that most of the young—including two-thirds of the teenagers and one-half of those in the 20 to 24 bracket—have no income maintenance during unemployment, either from unemployment insurance or from the auxiliary system of cash assistance paid by the state to persons who have not had the opportunity to gain insurance rights or have exhausted them. Most teenagers are expected to rely mainly on their parents, whether their lack of income is due to their being a student or to being unemployed.

3

Government Policies to Combat Youth Unemployment

Swedish labor market policies, largely directed by the tripartite Labor Market Board (Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen—AMS) are provided with substantial funds. AMS funding has grown rapidly since the 1950s—varying, of course, with the state of the economy—and has been about 3 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) in recent years. It has been used for job creation directed to pockets of unemployment, underdeveloped areas, and disadvantaged groups, as well as for activities facilitating labor adjustment to the economy's need for manpower through training and retraining, mobility allowances, and the provision of job market information by a strong public employment service and vocational guidance system.

Because youths are a large proportion of unemployed people and show a high rate of turnover, they have a great need for vocational training and guidance. Thus, the activities of the AMS are particularly important for young people. However, the AMS makes a point of extending its measures to stimulate occupational and geographical mobility for all age groups and skill levels, especially for those who have difficulty adapting to change. Great attention is given to the employment problems of older workers and to the entrance of married women into the labor market, especially into traditionally male occupations.

Activities that are aimed at increasing and diversifying labor force participation are continued, even in the face of unemployment. It is against Swedish principles to "solve" unemployment problems by keeping particular groups out of the labor force or squeezing them out if they are already participating. Particularly during the 1970s, however, both law and practice have facilitated access to early pensions when persons with relatively limited disabilities become unemployed and when changing them to new jobs would require difficult adjustments. This policy is based on humane considerations and not on the illusion that squeezing older workers out of the labor force will help young people very much, since the old and the young are largely noncompeting groups.

AMS has developed a substantial capacity for counteracting the effects of recessions and local structural disturbances on employment. Table 14 shows the average annual numbers participating in various AMS programs from 1963 to 1979. Between 1970 and 1972–1973, the number of persons involved in various labor market programs in peak months rose from 2 to 4.5 percent of the labor force.[1] These included persons engaged in relief works and sheltered employment, job subsidy programs, labor market training, and related programs. Following the decline in economic activity that succeeded the boom of 1974, these activities were again increased and have at times surpassed the previous peak level, reaching over 5 percent of the labor force, in order to counteract the negative effects of the worldwide slump and temporarily reduced competition on Swedish employment. On an annual average basis, the percentage of the labor force involved in AMS programs has been somewhat lower but has displayed an upward trend over the course of the 1970s and amounted to 3.8 percent of the labor force in 1979 (Table 14).

Measures Against Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment became a matter of special concern for the first time since World War II, in connection with the slump

[1]These figures are for February–March, that is, the months in which, for seasonal reasons, such activities have a relatively high level even during cyclical boom years like 1970.

Table 14. Participation in labor market programs, by type of program, 1963 to 1979. (Number of manyears: average number of persons in 12 months, or participation weeks divided by 48, in thousands)

Type of program	*1963*	*1965*	*1968*	*1970*	*1972*	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*[b]	*Under 25 years*
Temporary jobs	10.5	9.8	20.3	14.6	32.4	33.3	23.4	16.6	26.3	29.1	45.7	47.9	27.2
Measures for hard-to-place labor[a]	5.9	8.8	14.8	22.5	27.6	33.2	38.5	41.9	44.2	45.4	47.0	49.9	n.a.
Training other than in-plant training	11.3	12.5	25.8	28.8	36.2	34.9	30.6	26.9	28.2	41.7	46.9	52.6	18.6
In-plant training (including training to prevent layoffs)[c]	1.2	3.0	3.8	4.9	6.4	10.4	9.6	8.0	8.0	21.5	13.3	(3.0)	n.a.
Total[d]	28.9	34.1	64.7	70.8	102.6	111.8	102.1	93.4	106.7	138.4	153.6	158.4	
As percentage of labor force	0.8%	0.9%	1.7%	1.8%	2.6%	2.8%	2.5%	2.3%	2.6%	3.3%	3.6%	3.8%	
Unemployment rate	1.7%	1.2%	2.2%	1.5%	2.7%	2.5%	2.0%	1.6%	1.6%	1.8%	2.2%	2.1%	5.0%

[a]Sheltered employment (workshops for handicapped, archive work, assistance to musicians, work at home), semi-sheltered employment (handicapped hired by employers with wage-contributions from the government), and readjustment to working life in special courses or workshops.

[b]Changes of statistical methods in 1979 limit to some extent the comparability between this and earlier years (particularly for in-plant training).

[c]The number of manyears of in-plant training to prevent layoffs (the 25-KR program) has been estimated as 100 in 1974; 200, 1975; 1,600, 1976; 16,000, 1977; 1,500, 1978; and less than 1,000 in 1979. The number of persons participating was several times higher.

[d]Activities administered by AMS include, in addition: regional development subsidies (to both employment and investments); the release of investment reserve funds (tax allowances) during slack periods; government procurement orders to industrial companies with idle capacity; and various wage-contributions for keeping workers employed during slackening demand or for speeding up hirings in advance of an expected upswing. Such a full account would show the total to be some 15,000 to 30,000 manyears higher than shown in this table during the past decade. Thus, it has varied between 3 and 5 percent of all labor force, actually even more if seasonal swings are taken into account. (In addition to the labor market program are the activities of the Ministry of Industry in temporarily rescuing structurally declining industries, such as shipyards, steel, and textiles, by big capital subsidies or state takeovers. Implying expenditures of the same order of magnitude as the AMS appropriations during a couple of years, these rescue actions may have prevented—for the time being—a reduction of employment in these industries by some additional tenths of thousands.)

in the Swedish economy in 1971–1973. The arsenal of measures to deal with it has been progressively broadened, especially in 1976–1978, when the "hiring freeze" applied by many firms threatened to have a particularly adverse effect on young people, despite the fact that the general level of unemployment did not rise much above the "ordinary" level of 1.5 percent. Before discussing the policies in effect in 1978, I need to provide some information about the administrative background and framework.

Sweden does not have a separate youth employment service. All employment services are integrated in a single public agency whose services are offered free of charge to all. Local employment offices, however, are urged to select at least one employment officer to work with unemployed youth. The services offered to young people include educational and vocational guidance and information (sometimes including visits to workplaces); searches for job vacancies, trainee positions, and jobs of the relief work type; contacts with youths on relief work to give them information about job vacancies in the regular labor market and educational opportunities; and follow-up contacts to keep in touch with individual youths.

The specific measures to combat youth unemployment, developed in the course of the 1970s, can be discussed under three headings:

1. Subsidies to municipalities and private firms for hiring and training young workers, both in temporary relief work and in ordinary employment; and public service employment designed to provide work experience for young people in central as well as in local government agencies.
2. Increasing and facilitating access to education within the regular educational system, as well as within the system of labor market training, including special courses for basic work-life orientation. (Concerning changes in 1980 for youth below 18, see page 89.)
3. Increasing the capacity of the employment service to handle placement, counseling, etc.

It is not possible to give an exact total for the number of people under 25 who are involved in employment or training

under all the programs mentioned. Solely in AMU[2] courses and in temporary relief work it was about 55,000 in February 1979, leaving 33,000 registered as unemployed. But there were also some tenths of thousands helped by the programs for handicapped, mobility promotion and subsidation of firms in difficulty.

Both central and local governments are trying to establish in practice a "youth guarantee" which Parliament declared as a goal in 1976—all young people should be able to get either a job or a place in a training-education course.

All of these activities are centrally administered by AMS, which has considerable freedom to undertake rapid and varied actions. On point 2 above, it cooperates with the National Board of Education (SÖ). On all points the municipal authorities are important partners. County labor boards and their district offices plan the scope and direction of programs at the local level, and they have a high degree of autonomy to choose methods that meet local and individual problems. Innovations and improvements in the fight against unemployment have resulted from suggestions both by AMS and by various commissions,[3] as well as by labor and management organizations and, of course, political parties.

Participation by youth in labor market training has been growing steadily, at least until recently. In principle the training courses sponsored by AMS are not intended for youths under age 20, who are expected to be still living with their parents. Their training and education is expected to occur in the regular school system, especially in theoretical and vocational courses in secondary schools. Here subsistence allowances provided by the government are considerably lower than in the

[2]AMU *(Arbetsmarknadsutbildning)* refers to the labor market training programs sponsored by the AMS.

[3]The commissions have included, in particular, the Employment Commission (members of Parliament and experts), which published a series of reports in 1975–1979; the Experts Group on Labor Market Research (EFA), which published reports in 1974 and 1978; and the Experts Group on Regional Development (ERU), which issued several reports during the 1970s. There are English summaries available for the main reports; information is also available in the annual budget request of AMS, summarized in English.

AMS training programs, which are designed for persons already in the labor force and presumably self-supporting. Exceptions, however, were made from the beginning for persons who had begun work at an early age and who had become unemployed. As youth unemployment rose in the 1970s, the basis for exceptions for youth under age 20 was enlarged. In 1978–1979, some 5,000 training slots were available for teenagers, serving twice as many persons as before in the course of a year.

Although the labor market training program is intended for established members of the labor force who need adaptation to changes in the structure of demand for labor, including quite a few over age 45, the emphasis is on the lower age brackets.

Relief Work Programs

By tradition the arrangement of temporary employment (relief work) has been the most forcefully anticyclical program in Sweden. Formerly it mainly consisted of heavy public investment in construction projects, e.g., road building, but it has gradually changed in the direction of lighter and less costly job programs more suitable for women and youth.[4] This was accomplished partly by amending the state subsidy for municipal relief works. The 1975–1976 program included an increase of the subsidy for special relief work for youth from the traditional 50 percent of total costs to 75 percent of payroll costs. This change made it more advantageous for municipalities to arrange labor-intensive jobs. Using American terminology, much "public service employment" was provided on this basis.

These relief work programs have not only shown the strongest countercyclical pattern of the various programs but also the most pronounced shift to emphasis on youth. Data for the last two business cycles show the rise during the recession years of 1972–1973 and 1978:

[4]In addition to temporary relief works, there are programs of "archive works" and other sheltered employment for the handicapped; these involved about 50,000 jobs in 1979, a rapid increase from 13,000 in 1968 (Table 14).

	1970	*1972–73*	*1974*	*1978*	*1979*
Total number employed (thousands)	15	33	12	46	47
Percentage of labor force	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	1.1%	1.2%
Percentage under age 25	4%	19%	18%	66%	68%

Source: Johannesson and Schmid (1979).

The percentages for youth are estimates based on somewhat incomplete data. The data show the pronounced rise in the percentage of youth in recessions. This was also true for female participation, which grew from 4 percent in 1970 to 30 percent in 1978.

In December 1978, 44,000 young persons aged 16 to 24 were engaged in relief work. Of these 5,500 (or 13 percent) were in central government services; 26,000 (or 59 percent) were in local government services; 10,600 (or 24 percent) were in private firms; and 1,700 (or 4 percent) were in other relief works (that is, traditional public works). Because of an improved situation in the labor market in the later part of 1979, relief works were reduced to 30,000 youth in December 1979.

The objective of relief work for youth, beyond merely providing employment in a slack market situation, is to provide work experience and skills that facilitate placement in the open labor market, a basis for realistic educational and occupational choices, and a stimulus for education. Under AMS policies, relief work should include a variety of tasks, in order to provide work knowledge and experience that will be of value to the young person in the future. When youth are told about relief work, the temporary nature of the work is stressed, and those on relief work are encouraged to maintain contact with the employment service and actively to seek work in the open market.

Theoretical teaching can be provided on relief work for youth, if appropriate with regard to age, education, etc. Occupationally oriented theoretical instruction is sometimes arranged

in direct connection with practical work. In addition, it is considered appropriate for participants to obtain schooling in civics, with emphasis on labor market and occupational orientation. Arrangements are made for study visits to firms, public institutions, schools, etc., if such visits can contribute to employment decisions.

The ability of municipalities to finance relief work varies greatly among them, but the increase in the state subsidy to 75 percent in 1976 was effective in bringing about a considerable increase in the number of jobs provided for youth. The occupational range of employment has been wide, but in all cases it consists of socially useful work, such as health care, office work, factory work, and kitchen and cleaning work (in hospitals, for example), work within the postal service and the National Telecommunications Administration, etc.

Despite obstacles inherent in public service rules, some local governments have developed arrangements under which they virtually function as "employers of last resort," seeing to it that young people are given at least some work to do until they find a regular job or enroll in an educational course. In the public service, there is much meaningful work or on-the-job training to be arranged for young people, once the various management units have been induced to take the trouble of administering such work and training.

Although the municipally arranged temporary relief works have remained most important both for youth and for older persons, similar arrangements in central government agencies and private firms have increased in importance in recent years. Thus, the program of 1975–1976 included an order to all state agencies to hire young persons for work experience (including training positions) to a greater extent than before.

During the greater part of the 1970s, private employers have been offered cash grants for hiring young people. The rules for these incentives and the amounts involved have varied, largely in the direction of simplification of the rules and increases in the amounts. Since November 1977, they have amounted to 75 percent of the wage costs during six months "relief work in private enterprise." The subsidies are received if, in addition to

their normal recruitment, employers hire youths under age 20 without work experience who are referred by the employment service. These young persons are paid at union rates and each placement must be approved by the trade union concerned. The work should include or be combined with at least some element of training for valuable skills.

Although these hirings are intended to lead to permanent employment, this does not always materialize. In fact, these jobs have been exempt from the employment protection law. This law, mentioned earlier, makes it difficult for an employer to dismiss a worker, particularly if he has been on the job for six months or more—a provision that seems to make employers reluctant to hire young people for a longer period. Most union contracts, however, include a clause permitting hiring on a trial or probation basis—a provision that should eliminate this reluctance. The entire matter has become a subject of political controversy. At any rate, this relaxation of the rules has reduced employers' reluctance to hire youth.

Experience has shown the importance of follow-up of youths in relief work. Many participants have been able to enter the open market after a time, while others have obtained permanent employment in the firm or agency first providing the temporary job. Still others have gained practical experience in an occupation in which they have been interested and in this way have been stimulated to continue their education. On the other hand many cases have given rise to criticisms, e.g., from the trade unions, about nonobedience to the rule that the job should include valuable experience and not just routine work. Even in such cases, however, the youngster has obtained "work points" that can help him/her to gain admission to the educational programs they may desire in secondary schools or in colleges.

The aftereffects of the different temporary relief work programs for youth (public and private) have been studied by a sample survey covering one-fifth of those 4,500 youths who had terminated a six-month relief job in January 1978. This inquiry indicated that 31 percent immediately got a normal-type job (most often with their relief-job employer); 30 percent

went to studies or military service; and 39 percent found themselves unemployed for some time. Sooner or later during 1978 most of the last group got temporary or permanent jobs in the open market or in another relief job. Thus, after one year, unemployment was 12 percent; 41 percent had open market employment; 12 percent had relief jobs; 18 percent were in studies (4 percent in AMU courses); and 15 percent were in military service or otherwise outside the labor market.

Regional and Other Employment Premiums

Since 1970, there has existed a regional employment promotion program in the form of wage contributions and investment grants and loans in the northernmost "inner area," which includes about 5 percent of the Swedish population. It is not confined to youth, but it is particularly important for them as it is designed to counteract the "no-new-hires" policy that hits newcomers to the labor market. Before 1980 it provided subsidies of varying amounts (usually 30 to 50 percent) to investment expenditure and a total $4,000 wages per person including fringe benefits (about 10 percent) for the first three years after a net increase of employment. Obviously, this implies a larger percent for youth, with their lower wages. In addition, the employer could and can still receive larger-than-usual training grants for new hires, after negotiation with AMS.

Between 1965 and 1979 employment in manufacturing industries in this area grew by about 75 percent, declining in the rest of the country. Probably more than 40 percent of annually hired workers were below age 25. Under a new rule in effect from the beginning of 1980, the wage contribution part of this sort of subsidy has been sharply increased, in some areas to as much as $30,000 for a total of seven years, or about 20 percent of wage expenditures, if the net increase of employment over the base year is maintained for so many years, otherwise less.

During the fall and winter 1978–1979 employers could get an employment subsidy designed to speed up the hiring of new workers in view of an expected upswing in 1979. It started at nearly $3,000 (some 15 percent of average wage costs) and was

phased out in nine months. Preliminary evaluation indicates limited effect for youth.

A combination of training and employment subsidies has taken the form of grants to municipal and private employers who send existing employees aged 25 or more to training courses for upgrading purposes and who hire persons below age 25 to take the jobs of these released employees in the meantime. These programs have been used to a relatively limited extent (about 1,000 slots filled in 1978), probably because other programs that are not specifically related to youth often are more advantageous and less complicated administratively.

Finally, we should mention the geographical mobility allowance, even though it is not intended as a youth program. Annually, some 20,000 workers benefit from such allowances, which currently average about 5,000 KR ($1,100) to compensate them for the costs of moving to a new area, when they are so advised by the employment service. The proportion of youth under age 25, which has always been high in this program, has been growing in the 1970s. Since 1975 it has been about 60 percent. Persons under 20, when they move to a new job under this program, get reimbursement for costs of a certain amount of travelling to visit parents, etc.

Program Changes Planned in 1980

For youth up to age 18 the government has now proposed discontinuation of the temporary relief employment program in mid-1980. In the government's view, the relatively high income received in such jobs tended to lure the young away from education and training in secondary schools. Moreover, it had been difficult to be sure that even the limited amount of training foreseen in the relief work program really was effected or that those engaged really were additional to workers in ordinary production. Arrangements would be made to receive additional students in the secondary system schools from the fall term 1980. In view of the low motivation for schooling in traditional forms among some of those who leave the compulsory school, additional possibilities for vocational education and training

would largely consist of training within industry or some sandwich course arrangement. The necessary economic support from the government would probably cost less than average expenditure per student in the schools. The students (or apprentices) would only receive the study support that is given to secondary school students in general (about $55 per month plus travel or lodging allowances). All this implies a considerable saving for the state budget, something that certainly has contributed to the decision about this proposition in view of the huge deficit of the current state budget.

On the other hand, those municipal and private employers who currently are providing temporary relief jobs, due to expire after the first six months, would be encouraged to change these into normal jobs (under ordinary employment security rules) by a prolongation of the 75 percent subsidy for another six-month period. Although this proposal to some (limited in practice) extent takes care of the current criticism of the looseness of the temporary relief jobs, the political opposition parties have criticized the government bill as representing a retreat from the earlier declared goal of a "youth guarantee."

In other respects, the government bill proposed only a few changes in existing youth programs. The government bill was approved by Parliament in June 1980 against the votes of the opposition parties as concerns the abolition of the relief work for youth below 18. (The remainder of my text refers to the situation before this change.)

Promotion of Training and Education

In the struggle to counteract youth unemployment and to promote a rational transition from basic school to adult working life, the promotion of training and education has been given an important role. The labor market training (AMU—*Arbetsmarknadsutbildning,* sometimes also translated "training for labor market reasons") is in principle designed to meet the needs of persons above the secondary school age, since the young, as we noted earlier, are supposed to attend ordinary schools with much lower subsistence pay than what is needed for those already established as income earners in the labor market. Thus, AMU is

normally limited to persons who are (1) 20 years of age or older, (2) unemployed or running a risk of becoming unemployed, (3) registered as seeking employment with the employment service, or (4) judged able to benefit from training to improve the individual's employment situation. It is also open to those under the age of 20, if they have a family to support, and to handicapped persons, regardless of their age or employment situation. In the case of training for jobs for which there is a severe shortage of persons with the requisite skills, the age and employment restrictions are dropped completely. In 1978–79, some 5,000 training slots were utilized by teenagers.

Table 15 presents data on the number of persons in various labor market training courses.

Table 15. Average number of persons in labor market training, by type of training,[a] Sweden, 1960 to 1978–79 (in thousands)

Type of training	*1960*	*1965*	*1970*	*1973*	*1975*	*1977*	*1978–79*[b]
Total[c]	6.6	15.9	33.9	46.0	35.3	48.7	49
AMU centers	4.9	9.0	12.1	18.9	15.2	25.5	27
Within firms[d]	0.4	2.7	4.9	10.5	7.8	5.3	
Regular schools	1.2	3.6	11.8	13.7	10.5	11.1	20
Other	0.1	0.6	5.1	3.0	1.8	6.8[e]	2
Percentage of women	14%	36%	46%	44%	51%	n.a.	n.a.
Percentage under 15 years of age	n.a.	n.a.	29%	38%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

[a]Includes courses arranged by Board of Education (beginners courses, reschooling courses, continuation courses, and adjustment courses), approved and subsidized courses within firms, courses arranged within the regular school system, and other courses (all under the coordination of the Labor Market Board).

[b]Approximate and not fully comparable with earlier years because of changes in statistical method.

[c]Items may not add to totals because of rounding.

[d]Training within firms under layoff threats (the 25-KR program) not included. Counted in manyears, as the other figures in this table, these were about 16,000 in 1977 and 1,500 in 1978–79 although the number of persons involved was many times higher.

[e]About 5,000 of these enrollees were in courses on which there was no information as to the type of course.

Source: AMS—Labor Market Statistics, No. 1, 1980.

Although the labor market training program is intended for established members of the labor force who need adaptation to changes in the structure of demand for labor, including quite a few over age 45, the emphasis is on the lower age brackets. In 1969, about 30 percent of the participants were under age 25. By 1979, 38 percent of the 47,000 enrollees were in this younger age group. (These figures refer to the average number of slots filled during the year; there are strong seasonal variations.) The number of persons involved during the course of the year is more than twice as high as the number of participants at any given time, since the average length of courses is about five months.

These figures do not include subsidized training in private firms signalling redundancies. Earlier this had been of limited importance, but it increased sharply in 1977 to about 16,000 full-time equivalent trainees. The increase in 1977 was attributable to the offer of a subsidy of 25 KR per hour for the first month and 15 KR for the following five months to firms arranging training programs for their existing employees, in preference to layoffs or dismissals that would otherwise be unavoidable. The proportion of participants under age 25 was probably similar to that in the main AMU programs. In 1978 this program diminished in importance, as the number of threatening layoffs declined. Since the beginning of 1979, it has been simplified to provide 20 KR throughout the six-month period, but with a requirement that the employer finance the first 40 hours of training (this to prevent abuse). With the 1978-79 reduction of notification about imminent layoffs, the scope of this program has gone down to only about 1,000 cases.

Labor market training in its entirety is used as a means o. counteracting cyclical or seasonal employment changes, by increasing the number in training sharply in slack periods and holding it constant or decreasing it during expansion. In recent recessions, training has sometimes absorbed over 1.5 percent of the labor force.

Most training is conducted at permanent or temporary AMU centers, but it is also arranged in regular secondary schools, and enterprises. AMS can also pay temporary grants to

private firms and municipal authorities to compensate them for initial training costs.

The special courses under the 25 KR scheme in order to keep workers in their earlier employment were mainly arranged by the respective employers on the spot. This was often done in improvised ways and only for one month per person, without the five months' continuation at 15 KR. In these cases, the trainees returned to work without any subsidy, while others were released for training. This short-spell training was often rather cheap and general. It was indicated from the beginning that it could take the form, in cooperation with the trade unions, of providing information about the new labor laws: co-determination, workers' protection, employment security, trade union rights, etc.

All AMU courses are tuition-free, and trainees receive subsistence allowances (or their ordinary wages when the employer is subsidized). The increases in allowances for trainees who have been unemployed lagged behind increases in unemployment benefits over the years, so that they often fell below unemployment benefits. Since the beginning of 1977, they have been set at 10 KR a day above any unemployment benefits for which the participants may be entitled. This keeps the income of participants after taxes about 80 to 90 percent of their ordinary wage in the case of those with unemployment insurance benefits, but at a much lower level for those who are not insured.

To the greatest extent possible, the AMU courses are held continuously throughout the year, without any traditional division into terms, and trainees may be admitted at any time. In such cases conventional lessons directed by the teacher are not common. Instead, trainees are left to study and train themselves independently as much as possible, adapting the pace of their studies to their own abilities, under the teacher's guidance.

Training at an AMU center typically begins with eight weeks of general theoretical education. If additional theoretical training is needed, a course of 12 to 16 weeks in duration is available. The aim is to give the participants with deficient basic education, or those who left school long ago, a better foundation on which to build subsequent vocational training.

Many inexperienced young people have been offered training courses of a few weeks' duration, implying social studies and information about the labor market, some work practice, and vocational guidance. From January 1980, when most of the employment service activities for persons difficult to place got a new administrative frame in a new agency (the Labor Market Institute–*Arbetsmarknadsinsitutet* [AMI]), some of the ALU courses are being continued there. Similar courses are also arranged in the frame of the ordinary secondary schools. They seem to be of value for youth hesitant about their path from school to work.

The occupational distribution of AMU courses must be readily adaptable to varying labor market requirements. Not only the occupations included, but also the scope, range, content, location, and timing are therefore subject to prompt revision. Solution of the administrative problems associated with this flexible policy requires considerable freedom of decision making for local labor market agencies, in cooperation with municipal and school authorities, trade unions, and employers. It also implies centrally organized provision of educational materials (equipment, books, curricula) and of teacher training, as well as the retention of reserve capacity in permanent or temporary training centers during full employment periods, so that courses can rapidly increase their intake as soon as the employment situation in an area begins to deteriorate.

In connection with an experiment with intensified employment services for youth in 24 towns (see below), special efforts were made to interest young people in obtaining occupational training. In addition, attempts were made to create suitable educational alternatives for those who had chosen not to apply for any of the regular programs in the secondary schools or had not been accepted for the course they wanted. It is often difficult to motivate these for education. The reasons given were "school fatigue" (disliking school and lack of success in school) and financial need during schooling. As part of the experiment, and against the ordinary rules, youths under the age of 20 were made eligible for vacancies at AMU centers, for programs with a maximum duration of 12 months.

These offers were not utilized to any great extent in the

typical AMU courses of several months. Especially in the case of those not eligible for unemployment insurance (lacking the necessary period of employment for eligibility), training allowances have been regarded as inadequate for longer periods of training. These persons receive only the noninsured unemployment allowance ("cash assistance") of 75 KR per day, plus the ordinary training incentive of 10 KR (about $20 in all).

Greater interest was shown, however, in the courses of four to six weeks, mentioned earlier, which were given at regular places of work. In some cases, courses were arranged especially for youths, while in other cases young people and adults were together. A large proportion of participants obtained employment, often at the place of work where practical experience was given. In other cases, participants have become motivated to continue in some form of more comprehensive training. What started as an experiment therefore has become part of the system.

It is often alleged that training or schooling is applied as a method of "helping people out of the unemployment statistics," making the schools and training centers a sort of cold storage for the unemployed. The validity of this as an accusation rather than a positive endorsement of a policy for giving the unemployed something better to do than waiting in unemployment benefit queues depends obviously on the alternatives available and on the quality of the training received. If it is recognized that no economic system can function without variations in the need for manpower in different sectors and areas, the question remains whether those who are no longer needed in their previous jobs shall be really kept in cold storage by a passive policy of just paying insurance benefits for doing nothing or be given something sensible to do while private or public enterprise has found something for them to do which is worth the wages to be paid. Sometimes this can consist of public service employment (and its various equivalents) in activities that are themselves less profitable and must be subsidized; sometimes it can consist of training, also subsidized. It can always be discussed in what proportions these three different possibilities ought to be utilized, and also to what extent the appearance of so-called ordinary jobs should be stimulated or restrained in view of long-term

optimality considerations (e.g., the risk of inflation). Some young people meeting difficulties in finding jobs have apparently decided to continue in school or to begin studies or training, with the assistance of study grants and loans from the ordinary postcompulsory school system. To what extent this has reduced the level of registered unemployment is not clear. Young people in Sweden, at least in the early 1970s, tended to react "perversely" to a slack labor market by joining the queues of jobseekers instead of continuing in their studies. The upsurge of secondary school and university applications, however, which began in 1976, implied a shift in the opposite direction in view of the slackened labor market in 1977-1978.

The introduction of a general right to education leave, beginning in 1975 and the associated introduction of grants and loans for adult studies may also have contributed to the reduction of unemployment, even though it was not originally regarded as a part of labor market policy in the strict sense.[5]

The labor market training program is not confined to unskilled workers but is intended for people at all skill levels who need to upgrade their skills for educational attainments. Thus, nearly 1,000 persons with some higher education, and many more with secondary education, whose studies seem to have led them into a blind alley, participate annually in retraining under AMU to help them shift in more promising directions.

Follow-up studies of AMU have shown that the program is rather effective. In the second quarter of 1978, about 19,000 terminated their AMU training. For 81 percent this meant completion of a course; for 7 percent, leaving to take a job; for 12 percent, dropping out for other reasons. At a follow-up inquiry six months later, among those who had completed their courses, 65 percent were employed in the ordinary market, and 8 percent in relief work or sheltered employment. The number of unemployed was 10 percent, and 4 percent were in studies. Finally 13 percent worked in their own household, were sick, or in military service. In fact, many trainees obtain employment

[5] For a detailed discussion of paid educational leave programs in Sweden and other European countries, see von Moltke and Schneevoigt (1977).

before their course is completed, which accounts for a substantial proportion of the dropouts from such courses; in this case in a period of growing unemployment, the figure was relatively low (7 percent). Among the participants, 59 percent answered that the course had been of great or "reasonably great" usefulness to them.

Benefit-cost analyses, including partly four years after-effects, show that AMU courses held in 1966 and 1970 had resulted in relatively large net benefits for the individuals, while those for society at large have been more limited, at least in terms of effects on public revenue, etc. As is usually the case, indirect and secondary macroeconomic effects are not measured by these studies.

Coordination between AMU and other forms of studies is becoming something of a problem in view of the discrepancies between income maintenance in the different programs. This is now a matter for consideration by a special commission on study support. Table 16 illustrates the different amounts received in different forms of studies.

Intensified Placement and Guidance Services

AMS officials often find it irrational that they can rather easily place unemployed workers in training programs, relief work, or subsidy programs costing $10,000 or more, while they have not time to invest a few days' work in placing disadvantaged persons through intensified "job development" work with employers or with "adjustment groups" organized to discuss problem cases in the firms, although this would cost only a few hundred dollars. This is a problem of insufficient staff in the employment service. And yet the value and potential efficiency of such activities have been documented in experiments with intensified employment service work for young people.

The Intensified Employment Service Experiment

Such an experiment with an enlarged employment service for youth in 5 cities, later broadened to 24, was carried out between September 1, 1975, and May 31, 1976. The local employment

Table 16. Government support to full-time students, spring 1980 (Rounded dollar amounts per month)[a]

Type of study and age of students	*Grants*		*Easy loans*	*Notes*
	Max.	*Min.*	*Max.*	
Upper secondary schools, ages 16–19	$ 135	$ 55	$300	Income and means tests for additions to basic grant of $55. Also available: either commuting (max. $80) or lodging (max. $70) allowance. School lunches free. Access to loans geared to age and adherence to parents' household.
University and college undergraduates, any age. Secondary school, ages 20 up	1080	60	460	Minimum grants and maximum loans as long as normal study results are shown each term. Loan reduced in case of own or wife's income during term above certain minima. Doctorands can compete for stipends at the (max.) level of labor market training.
Schools for adults (municipal and other), ages 20 up	700	570	210	Money available for some 20,000 full-year grants, often used for short or part-time studies. Keen competition. Priority to persons with only short primary schooling. Level of grant 65% of level in labor market training.
Labor market training, ages 20 up (or lower with family duties)	1080	870	— —	Level of grant above minimum is determined as equivalent of the person's right to unemployment benefits (varying) plus 10 KR per day. Access to unemployed, persons with expected employment difficulties, and anyone entering training for "shortage occupations."

Note: All grants are taxable income, paid for actual participation only, i.e., maximum 9 months per year in most schools. The loans have to be repaid according to predetermined plans, but only when the

offices in these municipalities were given 73 additional officers to carry out the extra work. The number of youths aged 16 to 19 seeking jobs at these offices and thus affected by the experiment amounted to 3,300. Two-thirds were girls, a reflection of the greater difficulties they meet in the labor market.

The purposes of the experiment, among other things, were (1) to study organizational ways of achieving cooperation among employers, trade unions, the schools, and the employment service; (2) to study ways in which continual follow-up activities and a more formal organization within the employment service for serving young jobseekers might achieve a reduction in youth unemployment; and (3) to study personnel requirements and working conditions in different firms in order to enable the employment service to prepare young people for work and to follow their development.

The experiment was carried out within the framework of the regular employment service. In addition to the increased employment service resources for youth, it included increased possibilities for arranging training, relief work, and semi-sheltered and sheltered employment for the handicapped. Among the young persons seeking work during the period of the experiment, one-half were employed and not seeking work at the end of the period, while another 14 percent were employed but seeking another job. Others were in training, military service, working at home, or ill, but some 10 percent were still (or again) unemployed.

Only a small proportion of the jobs spontaneously offered by employers were suitable for youths lacking occupational training and having only slight work experience. Thus, in order to line up suitable jobs, the employment service conducted a comprehensive job development program. Attempts to contact

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person's income is over certain minima. Rate of interest 3% (or lower if rate of inflation is lower). Various special circumstances may modify the figures presented in this table. The big difference between the grants given in schools and universities and in adult courses stems from the theory that participants in the latter have been working for an income, which they need to maintain, while participants in traditional youth education have not. On the other hand, higher support to college and university studies (on top of the free tuition) from taxpayers, most of whom have not had this privilege, is regarded as inequitable. However, with more and more overlapping between the categories (often sitting in the same classroom) some reorganization of the system is becoming necessary. A special commission is studying the question.

[a]Exchange rate applied: $1 = 4.20 KR.

employers by mail were not successful, but follow-ups by telephone or personal visit yielded favorable results.

As a means of helping to match young jobseekers to available jobs, the employment service arranged study visits to local workplaces. To some extent, employment officers accompanied uncertain applicants to the places of work to contact the personnel manager and union representatives.

Career guidance and vocational rehabilitation officers were generally not directly involved with placement, but were continually consulted, and young people with special needs were referred to them. Consultation with psychologists was tried in various ways. This appeared valuable for youths who were uncertain of themselves and of their occupational plans, for those who were passive and apparently unmotivated for either work or education, and for those with various kinds of handicaps.

This experiment, which was only one of a number of similar experiments concerned with jobseekers with special needs, yielded a clearer understanding of the situation of young jobseekers. It confirmed the evidence from statistical data that, despite existing unemployment, even those with no schooling beyond compulsory school can usually get jobs after a period of search, but often these jobs are of short duration. What such young people need is alertness. Even if the errand-boy type of job has largely disappeared, there are many other jobs in factories and in services that can be performed by youngsters. Often these jobs do not lead to anything durable, but many young people have no clear career plans either. Sooner or later, however, they should get out of a pattern of casual work and return to training or education that will contribute to their skill development.

One of the conclusions of the experiment was that special efforts of the sort applied can help reduce the length of youth unemployment. The number of young jobseekers placed in the participating cities was clearly higher than in other comparable areas during the period of the experiment. The difference was not more than 10 percent above the usual level of placements, but, since a large proportion of placements are free of special problems, this may represent a rather pronounced increase in the number of relatively difficult placements.

The hypothesis that rising youth unemployment was due to "changing attitudes toward work," or to the unwillingness of young people to "take dirty work," was not confirmed. Only 7 percent of those who were unemployed had refused a job offer. In some cases, in fact, there could be good reasons to advise them to be more choosy, so as not to accept jobs of little value in terms of work experience or training opportunities. Clearly, the 7 percent had actually looked for work, and there is also evidence from other studies that young unemployed persons prefer work to idleness.

The growing understanding of the need for continual contact with young people who seek work rather than education or training has led to recent government action. Local school authorities have been given the responsibility to maintain contact for two years with those leaving the comprehensive school. Largely, it will be the study and vocational orientation (SYO) counselors who will maintain contact with the youngsters, whether they continue in secondary schools or take jobs or do something else—on occasion advising them as to alternatives. They will, when necessary, have to cooperate with the employment service and with social, health, and police authorities.

The Employment Commission. on the basis of this and other studies of the potential possibilities of an intensified employment service, suggested a doubling of the number of officers in the employment service by adding 4,000 persons. The government and Parliament have shown a certain understanding for these ideas and in 1978 and 1979 moved in this direction by approving several hundred new positions, largely for the particular purpose of helping in the placement of youth and of women in male jobs. Further steps in this direction are, however, not envisaged by the present government in 1980, in view of the huge budget deficit (despite arguments that a speeding up of the adjustment process in the labor market may lead to benefits to public treasuries).

Social Services for Problem Youth

It is clear that a limited percentage of young people, perhaps around one-tenth of those registered as unemployed by the employment service, are unable to find or sustain durable work,

education, or any other meaningful activity, despite efforts on the part of the employment officers. They may have tried relief work of the most common types and have been unable to cope with it. They are often on the registers of the Social Welfare Service; they frequently have alcohol or drug problems; they have a history of problems in school; they often have not completed compulsory school (to age 16) or have completed it with low grades. Many of them have feelings of inferiority, are immature, and have difficulty in understanding their many problems. They are often emotionally unstable, lack meaningful free-time activities, and spend their time with friends who have similar problems. A number of them have criminal records.

Joint efforts by the employment service and the social welfare service have shown that, for problem youths, offering only conventional relief work is insufficient. They also need to have some type of contact person constantly available, both on the job and during their free time. It is important that both their work and their free-time activities be meaningful to them. Moreover, work is an essential component of any successful treatment of alcohol or drug abuse. Thus, it is not appropriate to delay job placement.

One proposal that emerged from the experiment in the 5 towns and some of the 19 added later was to build a comprehensive and intensive rehabilitation program around a relief work program. The relief work would be so planned as to enable the individual to leave once a week to meet with his group and his group leader. Each participant would have an "elder brother" at the workplace, who would be interested in working with the youth and would have the time necessary to devote to the task. The "elder brother" would receive modest compensation for the work. Some local experiments along these lines have reported encouraging results. The costs are high, but the gains from avoiding the cost of a year in prison are incomparably greater, even if we count only the financial gains and ignore the social values to be achieved. In FY1979-80, on an experimental basis, KR 2500 ($600) is offered for half-year periods to persons functioning beside their ordinary work as helpers to handicapped or young people who need particular help with adaptation to a new workplace.

Vocational Counseling System

Sweden has not been entirely free from the problem, familiar in all countries, of friction or competition between school and labor market authorities concerning the transition from school to work. On the whole, however, good cooperation has been established. A basic principle is that counseling and guidance should be concerned both with the world of education and the world of work. Since the 1950s, special teachers have served as part-time vocational counselors in the schools, giving both individual advice and general information. The labor market administration includes vocational guidance officers as well, serving both young entrants to the labor market and adults who want to change their occupations. These vocational guidance officers also can visit schools to give occupational orientation lectures.

Under a parliamentary decision of 1971, the system of guidance activities in the schools has gradually been changed. Specialized officers for vocational orientation and study (SYO) are being engaged in all educational institutions to take over the tasks of the special teachers mentioned earlier. In addition to other competencies, SYO counselors must have passed a one-year academic course specifically concerned with their responsibilities. Before entering this course, they must have had at least six months' work experience outside teaching. Many teachers acquire these extra qualifications.

The SYO activities start at an early stage in the comprehensive schools, at least at age 13, before the seventh school year, in which pupils can choose certain optional topics. SYO counselors should also see to it that orientation about working life penetrates the curriculum at an earlier stage, counteracting, for example, traditional prejudices about "appropriate" male and female occupations.

The SYO activities are supported by a scheme called "practical work-life orientation" *(praktisk arbetslivs-orientering*—PRAO—formerly known as PRYO), that is, work practice for pupils. In the eighth grade, pupils spend about one week on group visits to various places of work (factories, hospitals, offices, etc.). In the ninth grade, or last year of compulsory school, they spend at least two weeks in one or two places of work, as much

as possible according to their own choices. This is designed to give them a clearer idea of what the SYO counselors have told them. This system has come to be regarded as useful, but not successful enough on this limited scale. Therefore, it is now gradually being changed to give the pupils much more practical work experience in various enterprises—from six to ten weeks.

The SYO counselors are employed by the schools, universities, and the employment service and are beginning to be used in firms and organizations, as well as in welfare and criminal-welfare bureaus. There are about 1,500 state and municipal counselors, with about 1.5 million clients. In the schools, the ratio is more like 1 to 700.

The SYO's system is regarded as experimental. There is disagreement about its pronounced integration with the schools (favored by SÖ). Some critics favor a closer relationship with the labor market administration. There is also uncertainty about the relative weight to be given to analysis of individual aptitudes versus orientation about working conditions and employment prospects in various occupations. Psychological testing is used to some extent, but its use is declining compared with less formalized interview methods. There are also differences of opinion about whether counselors should try to steer young people toward further study immediately after compulsory school or should guide them toward a recurrent education pattern, under which it is considered normal to gain real work experience at an early stage.[6]

Under the parliamentary decision on the SYO system in 1971, pupils and students with special problems are to be given extra attention by the counselors, but, at the same time, all students and their parents have a right to career counseling. If those who choose to seek work instead of continuing to secondary school meet difficulties in the labor market, the employment service and SYO counselors help them to enter schools or courses in mid-term.

[6]Pupils with low school motivation and other problems can be permitted to leave compulsory school early, but this possibility is applied restrictively—for less than 2 percent of the pupils in any given cohort.

In order to provide attractive alternatives to those who cannot be admitted to the streams of their choices in secondary school, the Labor Market Board and the Board of Education cooperate in the following ways: (1) through registering and announcing unused slots in secondary schools and "folk high schools"; (2) through expansion of secondary school capacity in certain programs and special courses, as well as establishing new, occupationally oriented courses lasting up to one year; (3) by arranging special courses at folk high schools and within the municipal adult education system, plus daytime study circles under the auspices of the study associations; and (4) by arranging the short course, already mentioned, called ALU (Work-Life Training) in the labor market training system, recently introduced as an element of the ordinary secondary school system as well.

A new plan on "The Internal Workings of the School," in effect since July 1977 and discussed more fully in the next chapter, provides both for changes in the daily program of the schools and for intensified efforts to ensure a successful transition from school to work. At the same time, local planning councils for youth have been established in each of the nearly 300 municipalities throughout the country. Such councils, which are usually called SSA committees *(Skila-samhälle-arbetsliv,* for school, society, and working life) already existed in many towns, but now they are obligatory everywhere. The local school authorities have the responsibility for leading these councils, which also include representatives of other municipal authorities, the employment service, and management and labor organizations. The SSA councils are required to follow, advise, and guide all youngsters for two years after they leave compulsory school. They must try, through outreach activities carried on chiefly by SYO counselors and employment service officers, to keep track of the youngsters until 18 years of age, making suggestions when appropriate. Obviously, these efforts are mainly directed toward those who meet difficulties in the labor market or in their studies or who develop tendencies toward delinquency.

There are some differences of opinion over whether paid employment with or without elements of systematic vocational

training, should actually be encouraged. Some think that such work should not be permitted to become too attractive, luring young people away from school prematurely; others believe that the principle of recurrent education implies that the life-long approach to advanced skills or higher education should not be downgraded by presenting school as having higher status than work.

An important aspect of coordination between school and the labor market is the arrangement of trainee positions, that is, practical work experience which is required as part of certain educational programs. The supply of such positions does not always meet the need.

The Employment Commission recommended in a memorandum to the government in September 1977 that greater efforts be made to encourage employers to provide an adequate number of trainee positions on a voluntary basis. The Commission majority noted, with employer members opposing, "However, we are not foreign to the idea—if this is not possible—of making it mandatory for employers to provide a certain number of trainee positions." The Employment Commission furthermore suggested a systematic promotion of sandwich-type educational programs to be arranged on a case-by-case basis. In this way, dropouts or young people unwilling or unable to enter regular school programs would be offered opportunities to alternate work experience with short educational courses. This would ensure their being taught something useful, as in other trainee positions, and not just being exploited.

The Commission, on the basis of its experiments with intensified employment services for youth, emphasized that those leaving compulsory school or even those who are still in school and who want a job, should have a right to as much help from society as those who are continuing full-time in school. Work and studies should be regarded as equally valuable, and work opportunities may have to be economically encouraged through subsidies and public service employment if this is needed to ensure for young people either a job or a place in school. These

proposals by the Commission, with the exception of the suggestion of compulsory rules for employers, were largely accepted by the government and Parliament, and are at least to some extent applied in practice through the various proposals described in the foregoing as elements of the "youth guarantee"—aimed at as a goal, although not yet fully achieved.

The new policy of 1980 (mentioned above, pp. 89 ff.) implies the establishment of a form of apprenticeship or training-within-industry for those 16 to 17 who do not want to continue school but can not find jobs in the open market. It will be a demanding task for the local school authorities and the SSA councils to ensure that these youths get enough systematic training by their respective employers so that it appears defensible to categorize them as secondary school students and to give them only the same amount of grant money as those staying in school. In fact, some trade unions have already negotiated contracts that set wages for the work these youths are going to perform.

4

The Educational System

Since the end of World War II, the Swedish school system has been subject to thoroughgoing reforms at all levels with respect to organization, methods, and goals. At the same time, schools have been enlarged to take care of the pronounced increase in the number of pupils and students associated with the prolongation of the compulsory school and rising enrollment rates in secondary and higher education.

The purpose of the reforms has been not only to promote the acquisition of skills and knowledge, so as to increase the citizen's capacity as producer and consumer of economic and cultural values, but also to alter the structure of society. Increased access to education should contribute to breaking down economic and social differences, as well as barriers to equality between the sexes and among geographical areas. The methods and curriculum should contribute to the creation of a more democratic attitude and willingness to cooperate among people in working life, instead of egotistical competition. Prejudice about "suitable" roles for men and women in working and family life, and about foreign ethnic groups and other minorities should be counteracted. In other respects, the schools should be neutral—that is, in political or religious matters—aiming only to

provide insights that will make it possible for young people to form their own values on the basis of intellectual honesty and openness of mind.

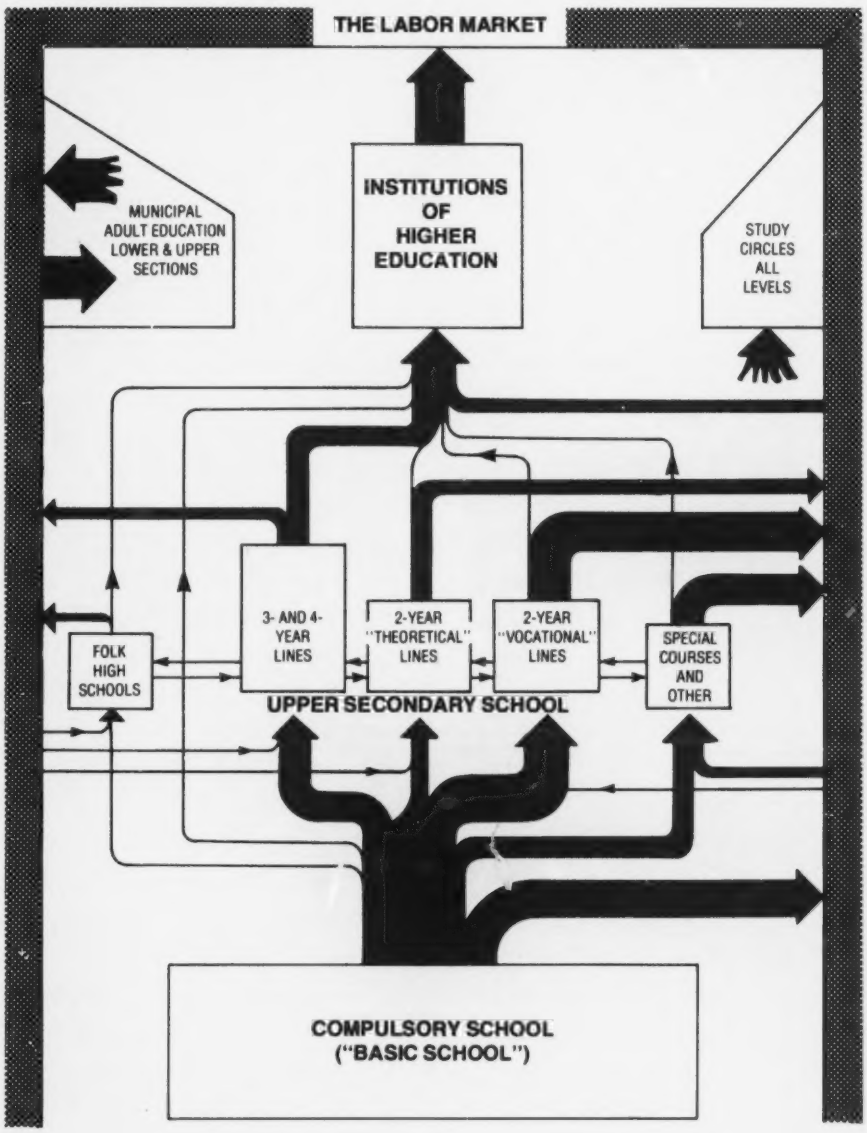
I cannot undertake a full presentation of all aspects of the Swedish school system, including higher education, or any very comprehensive analysis of its successes and failures. I will, however, discuss some features of the current debate about the obvious difficulties of the compulsory school in achieving the goals for which it was created and recent plans and efforts for solving its problems. I will also consider the roles of secondary and higher education in relation to society's efforts toward greater equality of opportunity.

The fact that many of the changes in the educational system have been enacted recently makes it difficult to evaluate their effects. The reform of higher education recommended by the 1968 governmental planning commission (U 68) and other commissions did not come into effect until July 1, 1977. Implementation of the parliamentary decisions of 1976 and 1978 about "the internal workings of the school" and the contacts between school and working life has had a slow start. This is partly because of controversies with the teachers associations about payment and rules regarding the new tasks of the teachers and partly because it is a matter for implementation by municipal authorities, in accordance with the principle of increasing decentralization.

Figure 2 and Tables 17, 18, and 19 present basic data relating to the structure of the education system in Sweden. Although participation in the regular education system falls off from age 16 on, the percentages who continue in school are higher than in other industrial countries, with the exception of the United States, Canada, and Japan.[1] Particularly noteworthy in Sweden, moreover, are the high percentages enrolled in municipal adult schools—even among those in their thirties and forties.

[1] For comparative data, see Gordon, with Trow (1979, p. 34).

Figure 2. Model of the streams of participants in the education system[a]



[a]The breadth of the arrows indicates roughly the numbers involved.

Table 17. The transition from school to work: Changes in the status of young persons from age 16 to ages 20 to 24

	Number	*In labor force*	*Both work and study*	*Students not in labor force*	*Others*
16-year olds	106,000	31%	11%	68%	1%
Plus immigration	2,000				
Minus emigration and deaths	1,000 140				
18-year olds	107,000	64	10	31	5
Plus immigration	6,000				
Minus emigration and deaths	3,000 350				
Annual averages of 20- to 24-year olds	110,000	79	10	13	8

Table 18. Percentage of young people, by activity status, one year after terminating basic school, 1976

Activity	*Boys*	*Girls*	*All*
Studies[a]	78%	78%	78%
3- and 4-year upper secondary years	29	26	28
2-year lines: "academic"	10	14	12
2-year lines: vocational	33	30	31
Special courses, other	6	8	7
Gainful employment	20	18	19
Seeking work	2	2	2
Other or unknown activities	0	1	1
Total	100	100	100

[a]All those accepted to upper secondary school are included under "studies." One year after termination of compulsory school, nearly one-tenth of these may have dropped out. The actual frequency of studies at that time is therefore estimated to be 5 to 7 percentage units lower than the figures in the table.

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Education 1979, Table 3.18.

Table 19. Enrollment of students aged 16 to 74, by age and type of school (percentage of each age group) (Fall term 1978)

Age	*Number (thousands)*	*Percentage enrolled*[a]	*Type of school, institution, or program*					
			Compulsory schools[b]	*Secondary schools*[c]	*Public adult schools*[d]	*Labor market training*[e]	*Folk high schools*	*Universities and colleges*[f]
16	108.6	84.0%	5.0%	77.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%
17	106.3	72.3	0.9	69.1	1.3	0.6	0.3	0.1
18	104.3	41.5	0.8	35.0	3.1	0.9	0.8	0.8
19	107.6	22.7	0.6	10.9	4.6	1.0	1.1	4.4
20	108.4	21.9	0.5	4.6	5.2	1.3	1.1	9.2
21	111.2	25.0	0.3	3.7	6.1	1.8	1.0	12.1
22	113.1	24.5	0.2	3.0	5.8	1.9	1.0	12.5
23	113.1	22.4		2.4	5.8	1.8	0.8	11.8
24	111.8	20.3		2.0	5.5	1.7	0.6	10.4
25	116.4	18.4		1.6	5.7	1.5	0.6	9.0
26	116.4	16.1		1.3	5.2	1.5	0.5	7.7
27	117.2	14.7		1.1	5.3	1.4	0.4	6.5
28	122.9	13.5		0.9	5.1	1.3	0.3	5.9
29	128.9	12.4		0.8	5.2	1.1	0.3	5.0
30–34	682.9	10.8		0.6	5.2	0.9	0.3	3.9
35–39	550.6	9.5		0.5	5.0	0.8	0.2	3.0
40–44	454.2	7.3		0.7	3.9	0.7	0.2	1.9
45–54	918.1	3.6		0.0	2.1	0.6	0.1	0.9
55–64	986.3	1.3		0.0	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.3
65–69	448.2	0.5		0.0	0.4	0.0	0.05	0.1
70–74	367.0	0.3		0.0	0.2	0.0	0.05	0.1
16–74	5993.9	10.9		4.0	3.1	0.7	0.3	2.9

Number (thousands)		653.1	9.0	239.9	183.4	42.5+	15.0	172.3
Men	2995.9	301.7	5.0	119.7	63.7	27.1	6.1	85.2
Women	2998.0	351.1	4.0	120.2	119.7	15.5	8.9	87.1

[a]Items may not add to total because of rounding.

[b]Approximation based on 1975 statistics.

[c]Includes "Gymnasium school" proper and a small number of separate institutions at this level.

[d]Municipal 2.73 percent and state 0.33 percent. The majority of these are in part-time courses.

[e]The figures here cover only courses under the joint administration of the AMS and SÖ. Other participants are counted under other institutions included in the table. Totals should be about 60,000.

[f]Represents the new (1977) concept of universities and colleges as well as a few other postsecondary schools.

Note: The figures represent the fall term, soon after registration. There are seasonal variations, particularly in the labor market training program.

Source: Statistical Reports U 1979:29, Students in Noncompulsory Schools.

The Compulsory School

Most people born before World War II received only six to eight years of schooling. A small minority used to transfer at age 11 to a separate school leading to more or less advanced certificates at the termination of lower and upper secondary schools—the latter opening the door to universities at ages 19 or 20. Today, all children attend one compulsory school from age 7 to 16 *(Grundskola* or basic school). This nine-year comprehensive school came into being by Act of Parliament in 1962, following a decision in principle in 1950 and an ensuing period of experimentation during which many local government units started implementation of this policy.

The compulsory school is, and always has been, the responsibility of the nearly 300 local government units (municipalities). The state provides about 50 percent of the costs in forms designed to ensure equal standards in all parts of the country, but leaving considerable (and recently increasing), room for local initiative and ingenuity. The central government is represented at the local level by regional school authorities (the 24 county boards of education). The National Board of Education *(Skolöverstyrelsen*—SÖ) is responsible for central administration. It has gradually become an advisory body, rather than an agency giving detailed directives to local units. However, the syllabi produced by SÖ are generally applied as if they were directives.

There are no qualifying examinations at any stage and no repeating of grades, except at the request of the pupils themselves or of their parents. The concept of pass or fail is in principle abolished, but in practice receiving a mark of only 1 or 2 on the 5-point scale is regarded as a failure. These marks are given at the end of the spring term in grades 3, 6, and 7, and at the end of every term thereafter.

The SÖ, as well as a public commission, proposed that grades should be abolished altogether at the basic school level. Some schools had been permitted to experiment with total avoidance of grades, and a substantial number of municipalities have abolished grading in grades 3 and 6. The SÖ regarded

the experience as positive, leading to a better atmosphere of teacher-pupil relationships without reducing the acquisition of knowledge. Although agreeing with this in principle (with the exception of the conservative party), Parliament decided in spring 1979 that grades should be continued in the two highest grades, 8 and 9, but only until a better system of admission to the secondary schools (in cases of shortages of student places) could be worked out.

When the nine-year basic school was introduced on a regular basis in 1962, it was decided that all members of each class should normally be kept together through the first eight years, although with a certain differentiation on the basis of optional choices of additional subjects and advanced courses in some of the basic subjects in the seventh and eighth grades. In the ninth grade, the pupils chose among several lines, one of which included those who specifically wanted to prepare for secondary school studies. After a few years, two-thirds of the pupils were in this relatively academic line, which had higher prestige and also provided a wider freedom of choice of line for further studies.

This "streaming" in the ninth grade was abolished under new rules adopted in 1969. Pupils now stay in their classes but may choose optional subjects during three to four hours of the school week in grades 7 to 9. These include French, German, economics, technology, and arts. In mathematics and the languages, they also may choose between an ordinary or a more advanced course.

The intention was that abolition of the old "binary" system, which separated pupils from the age of 11, as well as the avoidance of repeating of grades, should be followed by increased individualization of teaching inside the class. This required special attention to pupils with difficulties. In fact, "special teachers" have been engaged to help such pupils proceed at an ordinary pace. These teachers either work as "companions" to the main teacher in the classroom or work with small groups of pupils for short periods in separate "clinics." At any one time, about 20 to 25 percent of the children receive some sort of special instruction, usually for a short period in

each case. The proportion of special teachers among all teachers is similar. Permanently separate classes are now arranged only for those with severe mental or physical handicaps, but this sort of separation has gradually been limited also. Currently only about one percent of the pupils in compulsory school ages are in such separate classes in special institutions.

A complete school-leaving certificate in principle entitles all pupils to go on to upper secondary school, whatever their choice of subject combinations at the lower secondary level (that is, the last few grades of compulsory school). Entrance to some of the more theoretical lines, however, requires completion of the more difficult courses in English or mathematics during or after basic school. In addition, the choices of optional subjects influences the possibility of entering various lines in the secondary schools that have excess demand for places.

Under a 1979 parliamentary decision, which will be in force beginning in the academic year 1982-83, all pupils with school-leaving certificates from compulsory school will have access to all lines of the secondary school, irrespective of course levels and choice of optional subjects. Thus, the principle of making the choice as late as possible is being advanced one step more. This will necessitate special instruction for those choosing a line for which they are not well prepared (something already practiced)—or a consolidation of the secondary school into a less differentiated school, at least in the first year. (See below about the current commission on the further shape of the secondary school, i.e., *upper* secondary school.)

The compulsory school is largely nonvocational. Instead the policies of 1962 and those of 1969 envisaged the creation of closer contacts between school and working life. The need for vocational and educational guidance was considered to have increased under modern economic conditions. For this reason, the educational and vocational orientation has been strengthened, as we noted earlier, by increasing the number of study and vocational guidance officers (SYO counselors) and by the establishment of councils at the local level for coordination between schools and the labor market.

Education in the compulsory school includes both theoretical and practical labor market orientation as part of the curriculum. We have already discussed the developments along these lines in Chapter 3.

Integration Between Sexes and Among Social Groups

The deliberate delaying of the separation of pupils into different streams until after the end of the nine-year basic school in Sweden is unique in Western Europe. It was hoped that this delay would broaden the possibilities of choice and would also change traditional patterns of choices among social classes and between the sexes. Even so, the choice of subjects in the upper grades of compulsory school is still of great importance in relation to later selection of streams in the secondary school, as well as for performance in the more theoretical lines. It is therefore of interest to see if these choices continue to display traditional patterns.

As concerns sex differentiation, the old division of manual arts between carpentry and metal work for boys and sewing and embroidery for girls has been abolished all through the primary school. Both boys and girls participate in all types of such work. Moreover, teachers are instructed to avoid any tendency to take it for granted that men are in male jobs and women in female jobs. In particular, efforts are being made to help girls see that limiting their choices to traditional female occupations narrows their chances for anything but simple and low-paid jobs.

Some breaking down of the old traditions has been achieved, but only to a limited extent. In most respects, the traditional pattern of choices largely prevails with very limited change over the years. Boys more often take mathematics and girls more often English. The female participation in technical studies may be somewhat above zero, (2 percent in ninth grade 1978/79), but it is small compared with the 50 percent of the boys who make that choice.

Differences among social groups continue to be large. The most advanced combination of courses was chosen in a recent

year by 77 percent of children from families of university graduates, compared with only 26 percent from families of unskilled laborers.[2] From this and other evidence, it appears that the replacement of the old binary system by a comprehensive school system has not yet changed the education choice patterns in the later grades of compulsory school within social groups to anything like the intended degree.

The "extra resources" which the municipalities have received from the state in connection with the recent reforms are intended to be used primarily for special teaching help for those pupils encountering special difficulties, such as, for example, absence of support from the home. However, according to evaluations by a state agency concerned with reviewing the use of government funds, the local authorities so far have tended to use too much of this extra money for general educational purposes, such as reducing class size across the board and spreading access to special teachers to all schools, instead of allocating the special teachers to the schools with the greatest need for them. This indicates a conflict of goals associated with the decentralization of decision making on school questions.

In summary, the shift to the nine-year basic school has involved a positive, but limited, change with respect to equalizing educational opportunity. Social background and sex continue to have a strong influence on pupils' educational orientation. In turn, this influences their further possibilities for free choice and advancement through the next stage of the school system.

The Thorny Problems

Postwar reforms in the basic school have implied a reorientation of curricula toward more learning about "life and work" and less drilling of "the three R's." Thus, one might expect that measurable skills in the three R's would have declined, and a comparison between pupils in Stockholm in 1940 and 1975 has shown this to be true, except for reading (Börjesson, 1977). Measured on a seven-point scale, with 4 as the normal level in

[2]Central Bureau of Statistics (SCB), *Social Background and Theoretical Studies,* IPF, 1976:6, Table 6.6.

1940, average reading ability rose to 4.2 in 1975, whereas spelling and composition had gone down markedly, to levels ranging between 3.0 and 3.5 among different age groups. The investigators found that the growth of reading ability was probably attributable to the great amount of television viewing by children today. This often requires hasty reading of Swedish translations of what is being said in foreign films. The deterioration of writing and spelling appears to be explained by the fact that most homework has been eliminated and that the time in school devoted to teaching Swedish has been reduced by 25 percent. Similar factors account for a certain decline in arithmetic skills. The reduction of hours for these subjects was due partly to the general reduction of school hours (especially the introduction of the five-day week) and partly to the shift to other subjects, including English, which is now being taught from the third grade on. The reduction in skills mentioned in Börjesson's study can be expected to be more or less counterbalanced by better knowledge in foreign languages and in civics.

Another recent study has shown "functional illiteracy" among pupils continuing in some vocational lines of secondary schools in Gothenburg. There is apparently a certain proportion of pupils who leave the compulsory school with deficient reading skills. If they continue in school, they enroll in the practical work lines, but even there they are handicapped by the inability to understand written instructions. According to the author of the study, this is not because of low intelligence, judging from their performance in other activities, but because the teaching in earlier school years had left them behind in reading. Although this study apparently concerned exceptional cases of a sort known to have existed in the old type of school as well, it revealed important explanatory factors underlying such failures. It found that frequent changes of teachers during the early school years were the most important cause of the deficiencies in reading skills, so serious, in the author's view, that they could not be helped by TV viewing. In fact, TV functioned as a distracting element, largely liberating them from the need for, or interest in, reading anything at all during their most formative years. From other studies it is known that instability of

teachers is particularly high in schools in working class areas, where the childrens' support from their parents is weak. These factors tend to perpetuate the existing social class differentiation, and the efforts to provide special teachers for compensatory education have not yet sufficed to counterbalance this tendency.

There are similar complaints heard in other countries. Allegations by critics of Swedish school reforms that Sweden had fallen behind other countries were not confirmed in the research undertaken in 1969–70 by the International Education Association (IEA) on the evaluation of educational achievement. On this basis, the Swedish government report (1979) to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCED) on Sweden's educational system noted with satisfaction: "The conclusions were rather that the Swedish pupils more than held their own." This held true even in comparison with countries that had not gone over to a comprehensive school system. What has happened since these studies were carried out is not so clear. Since then, Swedish efforts to give extra help to those who tend to fall behind have been greatly enhanced. On the other hand, discipline problems seem to have increased, probably reducing teacher efficiency in the upper grades, particularly in the big cities.

Whether it was a good or a bad idea to shift the content of education to include more about "life," compared with drilling for basic skills, is a matter for debate. As in other countries, there is a heated dispute between those who accuse the reform educationalists of destroying the young by not teaching them to respect order, either in their heads or in their classrooms, and those who defend the reforms but admit that improvements are needed. Both groups obviously have to recognize the difficulties stemming from life outside the school walls, particularly TV. The rise in the proportion of working mothers is sometimes also suggested as an explanation, particularly as long as there is a deficiency of child care centers. No one can know that an attempt to return to old authoritarian methods would not be destroyed

by the development of even more fierce opposition against the authority of the school.

At any rate, there is agreement among all parties that the compulsory school needs reforms to make school work more attractive and meaningful for both pupils and teachers. On the other hand, there are signs that the cries of alarm about pupils' lack of motivation and orderliness involve hasty conclusions based on a few extreme cases.

In 1979, the "Association for an Orderly School" was created by a number of both conservative and radical educational specialists, starting a propaganda drive for "Knowledge in School" (the title of a collection of essays). The contributors were unanimous in their misgivings about the present school, but recommendations varied widely from the introduction of a pedagogy emphasizing self-fulfillment to "back to basics" through elementary drilling. No political parties, however, have retreated from the principle that pupils will be held together in all grades of the comprehensive school, regardless of their academic capacity and other characteristics. Solutions must be sought within this organizational framework. This is also the view held in the OECD report on education in Sweden.

One of the leading proponents of postwar reforms makes a plea for "a second school reform," maintaining that Sweden has not yet achieved "the reform of the teachers," which would have been needed to fulfill the original goals of the reform.[3] Individualization of teaching in the undifferentiated classes, this commentator notes, has not been implemented to the extent intended, nor has cooperation among pupils.

Quite apart from the egalitarian aims of the shift to the basic school, another major aim was individualization. The teaching methods of the old *realskola* for a selected minority could not be continued in the new school. These older methods

[3]S. Arvidsson in the Social Democratic monthly journal, *Tiden*, no. 2, 1979. There have also been comments in ibid., no. 4/5 and in the daily press. Arvidsson was the head secretary of the School Commission of 1976 and one of the architects of the basic decisions of 1950 and 1962.

were based on the assumption that all pupils could learn at the same speed, and those who tended to fall behind were disciplined by the threat of being sent back to the general school or expelled if they were above the school-leaving age of 14.

Now that both separation and repeating of grades are abolished, other methods of teaching must be used. Continuation of the old methods simply means that both the able and the less able must suffer. The former find school dull and boring, while the latter find themselves more intellectually backward than they really are, because the teacher tends to neglect them, instead of helping them. Their falling behind in reading ability becomes an obstacle to understanding each new step in the progress of learning. This can explain much of the bad behavior of some pupils, especially in grades seven to nine, as well as later.

Arvidsson accuses the school authorities of having failed to teach the teachers to use different individualized methods, which had been explicitly and repeatedly urged. If a pupil is asked to do division before he has learned multiplication, only because a common timetable has to be followed, the pupil is up against a blank wall. The teacher should not be a preacher from the pulpit but rather a resource person for each pupil. Recent investigations have shown, however, that the old *ex cathedra* teaching methods still predominate. Arvidsson also maintains that the desired individualization is not unattainable, but that different approaches to individualization must be used in different subjects. No pupil should emerge from nine years of school, however, without having learned those elementary skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic that are a necessity for everyone in modern society. Rapid learners can be given side courses and invited to help their weaker comrades in the class.

If the extreme criticism of the basic school were valid, it would be difficult to explain why not much more than five percent fail to get a complete basic school certificate at age 16, why the "full" dropout rate is limited to one percent up to that age, and why most of the pupils are still loyal to their schools. At least *some* progress in the direction demanded by the school reformers (for example, Arvidsson) was made in the 1960s

through the provision of technical materials for use in a more individualistic approach to teaching, and later the number of teachers was increased through the provision of "special teachers," mentioned above.

There are, however, other problems. The fact that performance of the type measured by marks for achievement in certain subjects can determine access to higher school levels contributes to preserving a spirit of individual competition among the pupils. It also tends to induce teachers to give most of their attention to pupils who they regard as good bets in this competition.

Other observers have pointed to the communication difficulties between middle-class teachers and the rising proportion of working-class youth in the higher grades of the compulsory school. Instead of the middle-class pupils taught earlier in the segregated schools, the teachers now have to cope with a partly unwilling captive audience of youngsters in a physiologically ebullient period of their lives. Differences in manners and speech may create mutual prejudice and misunderstanding. Even when working-class boys and girls have the personal capacity for success in traditional modes of achievement, they can easily be written off by the teacher because of the way they talk.

Enhancing this difficulty is the fact that teaching in the last three classes of the basic schools is conducted by a separate teacher for each subject. This inheritance from the old *realskola* may guarantee high teacher competency in the subject matter, but it means that the teacher must meet many classes, each for only a few hours per week. This prevents much personal acquaintance with the pupils.

Under these circumstances, mutual lack of understanding can easily develop into animosity and make school work a daily battle, in which the teacher's power to suppress undisciplined behavior is limited by the policy of deliberate abstention from the disciplining instruments of the old school—the threat of corporal punishment or expulsion. Not all teachers can successfully use the method of being positively inspiring instead. With the increase in the number of pupils and the concentration of population in large cities, the school units have tended to be much

larger than formerly. The weakening of social control tends to be especially marked when the school is very large. In fact, these big schools, often the pride of municipal politicians, invite vandalism against the equipment and brutality among pupils (especially toward those lowest in the pecking order, often immigrant children). On the basis of this experience, new school units are being built for smaller numbers of pupils than before. Some recent experiments with dividing big schools into smaller units seem to give great improvements.

This survey of "thorny problems" may convey an impression, which the general public in Sweden and abroad have received through mass media presentations, of schools on the verge of anarchy. Reports about the great number of teachers feeling psychological stress and wanting to shift to other occupations have added to this impression. However, a recent review of ten different surveys of teachers carried out in the 1970s indicates that the situation would benefit from less dramatization (Leijonhielm, 1979, *Lärarproblem* [Teacher Problems]). From this we take a few summaries.

A sample survey of 3,000 teachers nationwide in 1976 included the question: "How do you like the work situation in the classroom?" The proportions who responded that the situation was "very good" or "rather good" were 94 percent in the three lowest grades, 88 percent in the middle grades, and 77 percent in the three highest grades (Sjöberg, 1977).

Other evidence that the situation is not as bad as is sometimes painted comes from a 1976 survey conducted by the two trade union federations to which the teachers' unions are affiliated. The survey covered teachers and other civil servants, and the percentages giving positive responses to questions on satisfaction with their jobs were as follows (see table, p. 125).

In general, the extent of satisfaction of teachers with their jobs resembles that of all civil servants and is quite high. It is clear, however—and this is confirmed by other sources of information—that the specialized teachers in the higher grades of the compulsory school have a more difficult situation than their colleagues in the lower grades or civil servants in general.

	General teachers, first six grades	*Specialized teachers, three highest grades*	*All civil servants*
Are you satisfied with your job?	89%	71%	86%
Do you feel your job to be a real source of pleasure and personal satisfaction?	87	65	76
Are your contacts with clients, pupils, patients, the public, often a source of satisfaction with your job?	90	74	64
Have you often contemplated changing your position?	16	22	19

Other studies also indicate that the situation of teachers, allegedly intolerable in the typical case, is not very different from that of people in other types of jobs. In fact, absence because of illness is much lower among teachers than in other occupations. Most teachers can pursue their work in an orderly manner, but in a minority of classes in the higher grades of the compulsory school a few pupils take up a great deal of time through disorderly conduct. There is something wrong when 17 percent of the senior level teachers report that they have sometimes felt physically menaced by pupils, although the criterion for "menace" appears relatively mild when 9 percent of the teachers of 7- to 9-year-olds also report such fears.

More serious as a social illness could be the lack of motivation among pupils, which many observers believe has grown. Here, also, however, there is a lack of hard data to confirm this belief. Again, comparisons with the old school, where the lazy ones were squeezed out, can distort judgments. At any rate, the public, and especially the parent organizations, demands improvements in this and other respects. The public authorities have reacted, not by a retreat to authoritarianism, but by changes consistent with continued progress toward democratization of the schools. Democratization is proceeding in economic

life and in the world of work for which young people are being educated, and the schools should mirror this development. This is the basic view underlying the 1976 decision relating to the "inner working of the schools."

Further Reforms

The difficulties we have been discussing are being met by several new reforms that have been decided upon or are under consideration. The most important of these are the 1976 law on the "inner working of the schools," already discussed, and the new curriculum for the compulsory school enacted in 1979. A government commission on the reorganization of teacher training has proposed that the high degree of specialization in the upper grades, which now hampers contact between teachers and pupils, should be modified; opposition from the upper grade teachers may, however, delay or modify such reforms. In accordance with the original intention of postwar policy makers that there should be a "rolling reform" on the basis of gradually increasing resources and the accumulation of experience, amendments have been introduced every year and are being gradually implemented by the local school authorities on the basis of the principle of self-determination in the use of their resources. Experimentation is encouraged by avoiding precise earmarking of state financial contributions to municipal school authorities.

In addition to technical improvements, there are two central and interrelated purposes of the continued reforms. On the one hand, schools must be made more interesting and attractive to all pupils. On the other hand, all pupils must be given basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic at an early enough stage to enable them to absorb teaching in the higher grades and later to function normally as a worker and citizen.

The new rules for the "inner working of the schools" envisage a change in their daily program. The guiding principle is to be the "integrated school day" *(samlad skoldag)*. The school is to be available for the pupils during the entire day, and the schedule is to include not only classroom lectures, but also leisure-time activities. In the detailed planning of these changes,

the local school authorities are encouraged to develop their own ideas, together with the pupils, who will have class committees for cooperation with the teachers and school authorities.

These efforts will draw on the experience from various experiments that have been aimed at better motivation of the pupils for their school work, so that they will be less inclined to indulge in vandalism, truancy, and the disturbing of lectures. One way of organizing the school day that appears promising is to use the morning for classroom work and to leave the afternoon for activities planned by the pupils and their class committees.

Great emphasis is given to contacts with the world outside of the school. Much more time will be given, for example, to inviting representatives of youth organizations, artists, theater groups, parents, employers, trade unionists, and employment service offices to visit the schools and discuss their experience and views, using their knowledge as complements to that of the teachers, particularly as to working life and civic activities. The SYO consultants, of course, will also be involved in this type of program.

Another possibility is to involve the pupils in such activities as serving the school lunch and helping in the school kitchen. To give pupils some responsibility for the finances of the school, funds for leisure-time activities but with deductions for the cost of vandalism have in some cases been successfully established. Involving older pupils in helping and protecting younger children is another possibility, beginning to be used.

The implementation of these reforms has had a slow start, partially because of problems of negotiating pay and hours of work for the teachers under the new system, which will broaden their duties beyond the usual standard weekly lecture program. However, about one-half of the municipalities have begun an integrated school day program in some form, but only partially, involving about one-sixth of the pupils (1979). The state is giving the municipalities increased funds for the school activities, with the intention that these shall be applied where the greatest problems have appeared. Growing budget difficulties seem, however, to be slowing down the implementation of this reform.

The Secondary School[4]

Reforms of the secondary schools have gone in the same direction as those of the compulsory schools—toward integration and equalization of prospects for admission to higher education, regardless of the line chosen by the pupil. Until 1971, the secondary schools were divided into three main streams: an academically oriented *Gymnasium,* with a three-year program; a less demanding two-year continuation school *(Fackskola),* with a mixed theoretical-vocational orientation; and a variety of vocational schools. With limited exceptions, only the *Gymnasium* gave access to higher education. In 1971, these three types of schools were merged. In principle, but not in practice for all lines, entrance was open to all who had completed compulsory school. It was expected that 90 percent of 16-year olds would continue in these schools. All streams of secondary schools, in turn, provide "general qualification" for access to higher studies, but special qualifications are stipulated for some lines.

Education in the integrated secondary schools (now called *Gymnasieskola)* is divided into three principal areas: humanities and social sciences; economics and commerce; and technologies and natural sciences. These areas are in turn subdivided into lines. Altogether there are now 23 educational programs or lines. The two-year lines are largely a continuation of the earlier *Fackskola* lines and the vocational school lines, while the three-year lines are modified continuations of the more theoretical lines of the *Gymnasium.* The technology line can be prolonged to a four-year program. In comparison with American high schools, the Swedish secondary schools tend to provide a greater degree of specialization and vocational preparation.

The high degree of specialization is most visible in the technical and natural science areas. Most lines are further subdivided into branches, some of which are still further subdivided into variants. In addition, there are some 450 special vocationally oriented courses, which are not part of any regular program. These courses can last from two weeks to three years. Some of

[4] *Upper* secondary school as opposed to lower, or compulsory, school.

them can be entered on the basis of the basic school alone, while others can be entered only after two or more years of schooling. About 8 percent of all secondary school students are in the special courses.

Swedish language education is compulsory in all programs. To the compulsory subjects, a student has to add optional subjects, one of which must be of a "general" character, even in the vocational lines, for example, a foreign language, mathematics, civics, or religion. The options they take influence the possibilities of their entering different lines in higher education later. Students in need of it, because of illness or course change, have access to remedial teaching. Those with special difficulties in one or several subjects can be exempted from at most two compulsory subjects. Students who choose these reduced programs can, within four years of leaving school, take the subject previously dropped and obtain a new and more complete school-leaving certificate. Those who find that they would be better off to shift to a different line in midstream are helped to do so insofar as there are places open for them. Such shifting is usually possible because about ten percent of the students drop out during or after their first year.

Although there are no qualifying examinations for entry into secondary school, there are certain entrance conditions associated with some lines. The special and more difficult courses in English and mathematics in the last year of basic school, for example, are required for entry into the three-year natural science and technology lines. When there are more applicants than places in a specific line in a county, a selection has to be made. The rules for selection call for separating those who apply directly after completing the compulsory school and those who have been working at least six months into two groups, with selection to be made separately for each group. Thus, those school-tired pupils who refrained from trying to enter directly after compulsory school, as well as those who were not admitted on their first try, are given improved chances if they apply later. Those who have already completed a secondary school line and wish to start a new program are also separated from the main queue. Each such group is assigned places in proportion to

its number of applicants for the line or course in question in each county.

For some lines, there is a "free" quota for persons lacking formal qualifications but having practical experience or vocational training related to the line they are applying for. These are usually older students. The presence of such mature students, it is sometimes said, has a good influence on the school behavior of the younger students.

The length and main content of the chief study programs in each line are set forth by Parliament on the basis of government proposals. More detailed curricula are worked out by the National Board of Education. They are only "recommendations" to the local school authorities, but in practice they are usually followed as directives. Marks from 1 to 5 are given at each stage, but even here there is some debate about the rationale of this tradition.

In principle, all programs in secondary schools must prepare students both for the practice of an occupation and for continued study. The programs differ, however, in their relative emphasis on academic and practical orientation. The programs in economics and commercial subjects and the three- to four-year technical studies give students a high degree of freedom to choose between continued education or work after leaving the secondary schools. In the two-year vocational programs, on the other hand, most instructional time is spent in providing students with immediately marketable skills. These programs are aimed at enabling the student to get a job within the area of his education immediately after secondary schooling. In other words, they are similar to vocational training schools in certain other countries. Students learn about tools, materials, working methods, etc., but theoretical instruction is relatively limited. Thus, preparation for further studies is rather modest. In these vocational lines and also in those three-year lines that lead directly to an occupation—nursing, distribution, clerical work, etc.—students are given much of their practical instruction at places of work. Between the two years of the two-year technology line, nine months of work practice is prescribed if the student has not had such experience in advance.

Within the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and social programs, instruction is not directly related to occupational preparation. It might seem that those completing such programs have little choice except to continue study at the universities or other postsecondary institutions, but, in contrast with teenagers, they seem to have little difficulty in getting at least some sort of job. Even unskilled jobs give them "work experience points" if they want to compete for student places in the most sought-after lines in higher education. In fact, at present, only a small proportion of the graduates from these schools go directly to higher education without an intermediate period of working.

Relations to Society and Working Life

There were many reasons—social, educational, and economic—for merging the three types of secondary schools in the older system. One was to give students greater freedom of choice, including the possibility of changing lines in midstream. Moreover, it was felt that a choice of studies in secondary school should not necessarily represent one's final choice of future education or employment. On the foundation of a broad general education, it should be possible to go on either to practical work experience or to further studies, according to one's choice.

In planning and determining the capacity of secondary schools, three important factors are taken into account: (1) student demand for places in the various streams; (2) manpower needs as expressed in the labor market; and (3) the desirability of providing as comprehensive a set of course offerings as possible in each county and municipality. No single school, however, offers all 23 lines, so that there are always applicants who must be referred to schools away from home. This problem is alleviated to some extent by the fact that the selection of single courses is geared to local labor market conditions and to student demand.

In the early 1970s, some 70 to 80 percent of the students completing basic school continued immediately into secondary school. Special efforts from 1977 to 1979 to arrange more student places in attractive lines have encouraged growth in recent

years. In fall 1979, probably 90 percent enrolled in the 23 lines and in special courses of at least one year's length intended for direct entrance after basic school. The increased demand for specific occupational or vocational types of training has been met by some increase in the number of places in special courses.

Most secondary school students are enrolled in the 23 lines rather than in the special short courses. In 1978, 36 percent of these were enrolled in humanities and social sciences, 20 percent in commerce and economics, and 44 percent in technology and natural sciences. There is a dropout rate of about one-tenth per year, but this has been much higher for the particularly demanding natural sciences lines than for other lines. Thus, only 66 percent of those who entered the science lines in 1974 completed their studies in those lines, while the corresponding 110 percent figure for the social science lines shows that many starters in the natural sciences had shifted to the social sciences.

In fall 1978, when there were 108,000 16-year olds, there were 106,000 places available in the first year of the secondary schools, including the short special courses. The number of applicants amounted to 116,000, of whom 99,000 actually entered. Some of these, however, belonged to older age groups. The figures suggest that the number not going directly from the ninth grade of the basic school to secondary education must have been larger than 17,000.

The relationship between the number of places in particular lines and the first choices of applicants was very uneven (Table 20). There were 66,500 applicants, compared with 54,500 places, for the two-year practical lines and special courses. Among these, however, the demand for training in agriculture, health care, transport vehicles, electrical engineering, and woodworking was around twice the number of places, while there was large surpluses of places in mechanical engineering, distribution, and consumer programs. As for the theoretical two- and three-year lines, there were slightly fewer applicants (49,000) than places (51,000). The overall deficit of places in relation to first choices was actually 19,000, while at the same time there were over 10,000 places that were not demanded as first choices. Among the latter, about half of the places were

later filled by applicants who could not get into their first choice line, although some of the applicants preferred not to enter at all when they could not get the line, course, or locality asked for. All in all, 5,500 places were unfilled at the beginning of the fall term. Preliminary statistics for entrances in fall 1979 indicate a similar situation as in 1978 in the various respects mentioned here—despite certain efforts to promote an increased take-up.

As we have seen, not all the applicants were 16-year olds coming from basic school; some members of this cohort did not seek entrance, either because of incomplete basic school certificates, or because they preferred not to continue in school, at least not immediately. From data for 1976, it can be estimated that the average grades of the rejected applicants measured 3.0 on a 5-point scale, while the average for the accepted applicants was 3.4.

In the case of the vocational programs, the number of places made available is in principle based on labor market forecasts or observations. As a result of economizing tendencies among municipal political authorities, there is in practice a deficiency in some of the lines in which relatively costly machinery is needed—generally those providing technical skills—whereas the cheaper lines, such as consumer economics, are oversupplied. In fact, the three-year theoretical lines are those in which applicants can be most certain about places.

Despite the fact that not everyone could achieve his or her first-choice place, the Swedish system is one of the most advanced in the world, even before the most recent increase in the capacity of the secondary schools. Participation rates for selected age cohorts in fall 1978 are shown in Table 21, which covers students in regular secondary schools, including seven private schools, and a few special schools, such as those for agriculture and military service. Although high in comparison with other European countries, these enrollment rates understate to some extent the percentages of young people engaged in formal secondary studies. Between ages 18 and 25, some 5 to 6 percent of each cohort participates in what is called "adult education," but which is largely intended to give secondary school competence

Table 20. Applicants to upper secondary schools, by line of study, percentages accepted and actually starting, and percentages of the accepted, who were women, Fall 1978

Line of study	*Applications (1st choice)*	*Percentage admitted (1st choice)*	*Total admitted (1st, 2nd, or 3rd choice)*	*Total admitted (percentage of 1st choice applications)*	*Women (percentage of all admitted)*
Theoretical lines, 3 or 4 years	33,296	87%	31,531	95%	46%
E = Economics	6,678	85	6,394	96	53
H = Liberal arts	3,546	80	3,404	96	75[a]
N = Natural science	7,358	93	7,425	101	44
S = Social science	6,652	82	5,892	89	75[a]
T = Technology 3 or 4 yrs	9,062	88	8,416	94	11
Theoretical lines, 2 years	16,709	73	16,792	101	60
Ek= Economics	2,569	70	3,053	119	55
So= Social	12,351	75	11,920	97	69
Te= Technical	1,235	73	1,639	133	3
Mu= Music	554	31	180	33	61
Practical lines, 2 years	57,349	46	37,738	57	45
Be= Clothing manufacturing	473	61	422	89	97
Ba= Building and construction	5,334	60	4,544	85	2
Dk= Distribution and clerical	6,823	75	7,588	111	80
Du= Operation and maintenance techniques	245	66	256	105	3

Practical lines, 2 years (continued)					
Et = Electro-technical	6,306	46%	3,538	56%	2%
Fo= Motor engineering	7,052	39	3,284	47	3
Jo = Agriculture	2,586	35	939	36	49
Ko= Consumer	4,936	66	5,438	111	98
Li = Food manufacturing	1,543	49	998	65	51
Pr = Processing techniques	248	69	369	149	10
Sb = Forestry	983	54	637	65	4
Tr = Woodwork	1,095	42	560	51	8
Ve= Mechanical engineering	3,004	70	4,992	166	1
Vd= Nursing	16,721	22	4,128	25	94
GRAND TOTAL	107,354	63	86,061	80	49

[a]The presentation of the two lines was not separated.

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (SCB), Statistical Reports *(Stat. Medd.)* U 1979:2 and 9.

Table 21. Proportion of each age cohort engaged in secondary school studies, Sweden, fall 1978.

Age	*Percentage of* *Men*	*Women*
16	77.1%	78.8%
17	65.8	67.6
18	36.4	33.6
19	12.7	8.8
20	3.6	5.6
21	2.7	4.6
22	2.5	3.5
23	2.1	2.6
24	1.8	2.3
16–19	48.8	47.8
20–24	3.1	4.6
25–74	0.2	0.4

Source: Statistical Reports U 1979:28 (Students in Noncompulsory Schools).

to those who did not attend or complete such schools. Enrollment rates of these young adults in the various types of courses in municipal adult education programs are shown in Table 22.

In view of the current youth unemployment problem, Parliament decided in spring 1979 that the capacity of the secondary schools should reach 100 percent of the age cohort leaving compulsory schooling. There exists, however, also the opinion that the establishment of "secondary schools for all" will lead to an increasing gap between work and education. A program of internal education in firms, according to this view, would result in more useful qualifications and improved coordination between theoretical and practical education. Surprisingly, it sometimes appears that students from the compulsory school are preferred by employers to those from secondary school.

In fact we do not know to what extent the desire to enter secondary schools is conditioned by social conventions and by parents' and pupils' "established wisdom" that this is necessary

Table 22. Students in municipal adult education by study line, sex, and age, fall 1978 (numbers are rounded)

	Total	*Less than 19 yrs.*	*20 to 24 yrs.*	*Less than 24 yrs. as percentage of total*
Basic school courses				
Men	12,100	400	1,400	15%
Women	30.700	900	2,300	10
Secondary courses (2-year "theoretical" lines)				
Men	5,700	500	1,500	35
Women	9,200	800	1,900	29
Secondary courses (3- to 4-year lines)				
Men	18,800	1,200	4,700	31
Women	34,800	2,500	6,900	27
Secondary course (2-year vocational and specialized occupational training)				
Men	16,800	1,300	2,900	25
Women	35,700	2,200	5,200	21
All study lines				
Men	53,400	3,400	10,500	26
Women	110,300	6,500	16,300	21
Total	163,800	9,900	26,700	22

Source: Statistical Reports U 1979:10 (Municipal Education).

for success in working life. Some of those seeking entrance directly after compulsory school might have preferred to have some work experience before continuing in school. A marked tendency toward such behavior has been observed in recent years. It will probably be enhanced when the concept of recurrent education becomes more deeply ingrained, so that more people choose to follow such a pattern. A precondition, of course, is that they can get access to suitable jobs for work experience, and that even experience in simple jobs is regarded as

yielding merits rather than demerits in relation to access to further education. Some of the features of recent reforms deliberately go in that direction.

We recall that the local planning committees (SSA councils) for coordination of schooling, work practice, and employment promotion for young people, as well as the SYO counseling system for vocational and study orientation, are being formed to help young people with their vocational and study orientation through the years both before and after their leaving the compulsory school. As before, they are required to help young people make their choices and go through the period of transition from school to work—often implying several shifts between school and work—on the basis of a realistic appreciation by the youths both of their own potentialities and the possibilities in the labor market. Their assistance must be given, also, without prejudice as to sex roles, social status, etc. They are provided with information by the Forecasting Institute of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

According to such forecasts (1977), there will be a shortage of persons with technical secondary school education until 1985, after which balance will be achieved. In the natural science and technical lines, the supply is somewhat above the optimal level at present, but balance should be achieved during the 1980s, mainly because a declining proportion of young people have chosen the two-year technical line, owing to a weak current demand for persons with such training in industry. A shortage of persons with training in health care is anticipated, but there is expected to be a surplus of persons with education in humanities and social studies.[5]

Some problems associated with these developments have already been mentioned. The high degree of specialization results in maladjustments between the school programs and changing demands in the labor market, at least in the short run. Moreover, in spite of the administrative integration of secondary schools, choices of education and occupation are still influenced

[5] Central Bureau of Statistics (SCB), *Trends and Forecasts—Population, Education, and the Labor Market in Sweden*, 1977:1, pp. 121–124.

by considerations of status and by the traditional occupational patterns of social groups and the sexes.

During the last few years, however, an opposite tendency has appeared. Subsidies to firms for on-the-job-training and for the preservation and creation of jobs have been an increasingly important part of manpower policy, as we have seen, with emphasis on the placement of young people in such positions. In addition, young people have been given increasing emphasis in labor market training programs. This means that new elements of adjustment between the supply of young people with various sorts of training and the demand for labor in different sorts of jobs are introduced.

In 1976, a commission on further reform of secondary schools was appointed by the Social Democratic government. The directives to the commission stated that the present organization of the schools was not well suited to the development of a system of recurrent education. The highly specialized system of lines and separate courses should be phased out and replaced by a smaller number of combined study routes. The vocational lines should be given more theoretical content, and the theoretical lines should include more practical training. Everyone who completed secondary school should be able to choose freely between entering the labor market or continuing studies. This policy would be aimed at preventing choices at too early an age from binding choices at more mature stages. The directives also included a desire for better contact between school and working life during the period of study, and for cooperation and coordination among labor market training, adult education, on-the-job-training, and school agencies.

The Bourgeois governments which have followed have largely accepted this general policy but have felt that there should continue to be opportunities for early specialization. Therefore, they have amended the directives to some extent, guiding the commission toward a less thoroughgoing amalgamation of lines and courses.

Integration Between Sexes and Among Social Groups

The general aim of the reform of the secondary school system, as we have seen, was to give students from the compulsory

school a more uniform starting point for their subsequent educational and vocational activities. However, the specialization principle limits this opportunity, as observed in the various terms of reference of the Secondary School Commission.

Three questions should be considered in relation to integration of social groups and the two sexes. What is the sex and class composition of students entering the secondary schools? Are there differences in choices of study lines by males and females and by different social groups? Are there also differences by sex and social group in dropout rates?

Women have continuously increased their proportion of students in secondary schools during the 1970s, so that there is no longer any significant difference in overall entrance rates between boys and girls. In contrast, however, the choices of lines follow traditional sex role patterns, as Table 20 indicates. For example, women accounted for only 7 percent of all students accepted to the two- and three-year technical lines in 1978. Girls also tend to choose the "softer" theoretical lines more frequently than the boys (liberal arts and social sciences). Moreover, such lines as health care, clothing industries, and consumer studies tend to be nearly 100 percent female.

The 1960 secondary school planning commission had predicted that the relative number of female students in natural sciences would increase from 30 to 50 percent between 1962 and 1970. However, in 1978, women still accounted for only 44 percent of students in natural sciences. In three-year technical lines, the proportion of women was expected to rise from 4 percent in 1962 to 15 percent in 1970, but the actual proportion in 1978 was only 11 percent.

As for the influence of social background, a survey by the Central Bureau of Statistics showed that almost 80 percent of children of parents with higher education were enrolled in three-year lines a year after completing comprehensive school in 1972. The corresponding figure for children from unskilled workers' homes was 10 percent. About 30 percent of children of the latter group had gone to work, compared with 8 percent of children of university-educated parents. In addition, children from highly educated families are more likely than those from less educated families to choose the lines that prepare for higher

education (humanities, social studies, and natural sciences). Children from worker families, especially boys, tend to choose lines that are more vocationally oriented, such as economics and technology. Even so, the growth of enrollment in secondary studies implies some change in social class differentiation, in that pupils with high grades in the basic school now go on to further studies even if their parents are of the working class. During the early 1970s, however, low marks influenced children from such families to refrain from further studies nearly as much as in former times, whereas high-status parents enrolled their children in further studies even when their marks in basic school were low.

The Central Bureau of Statistics has also attempted to assess the impact of the comprehensive school reform of 1962. Has the biased recruitment to the various programs in secondary schools been changed as a result of integration in the last few years of basic school?

The results showed that most of the increase in the proportion of pupils going on to the three-year lines after the reform have come from the working class. Despite this, however, large differences among social groups continue. In 1972, youngsters from university-educated families were six times more likely to choose the theoretical lines in secondary schools than children of unskilled workers. Since it has become increasingly difficult for the statisticians to identify the social class of parents, later figures of this sort are not available. However, the fact that nearly 100 percent of each cohort now enters secondary school implies that an increasing proportion of working-class youngsters are now entering secondary schools.

The permanent dropouts from secondary schools, that is, those who leave without returning later, tend to be concentrated in the two-year programs and among students from homes of low socioeconomic status. A recent study by SÖ shows that some 11 percent of all students in two-year programs drop out and fail to return, compared with only 4 percent of those in three- and four-year programs.

Improved vocational counseling should reduce the number of unplanned dropouts, and such programs, as we have seen, have been progressively strengthened.

Undoubtedly the reformed secondary schools have not yet found the right policies in all respects for their combined role of preparing young people for working life and for further studies under a recurrent education principle. The forces conserving traditional choices are not easy to combat. They drive some young people to the theoretical lines and others to the shorter vocational lines for traditional social reasons.

In recent years, however, another trend has been observed, though not yet documented statistically. Those lines that involve the best preparation for the most attractive university programs, such as medicine and technology, are at the same time the most demanding, and students must work particularly hard to get high enough marks to enter these university programs. Many secondary students have found that they can get better marks in other lines and therefore shift to such lines if they have not initially chosen them. There is a certain tendency for those with high marks in basic school to use these marks as entrance tickets to the easy lines of secondary school, in order to get high marks for admission to the high-status university programs. This tends to leave more of the difficult lines in secondary schools to their comrades with lower marks. Another strategy for enhancing one's chances for entrance to the most attractive lines in higher education is to drop out of the secondary school and to enter, after some time, the municipal adult education system, providing a possibility of studying at one's own pace until high marks are achieved.

This somewhat impressionistic description of unintended developments does not necessarily imply that the problem is serious enough for great concern, but it illustrates a dilemma that appears universally. When a school system is broadened to give access to everyone, those who have gotten a good start, either because of ability or because of the social status of their families, often have superior chances to use the expanded facilities, even though these have been created to help the traditional underdogs. In this particular case, it may be possible to rectify the imbalances by changing the rules; this is being considered by the Secondary School Commission.

Another problem area for the secondary schools is the difficulty in creating integration between theoretical and vocational

studies. The latter depend to a great extent on cooperation with employers in private and public places of work. In fact, they do take forms not too different from an apprenticeship system, with more or less substantial elements of "related instruction." The vocational schools are still often separated physically from those of the theoretical lines. A recent survey by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) indicated that the intentions of the central school policy makers are often frustrated in practice. The school boards, headmasters, and teachers tend to reduce the attention given to pupils who are placed as trainees in workplaces, even though society is paying large subsidies to the employers who are supposed to train them. All too often the trainees are treated as cheap labor to run operations without much vocational training value. There is a clear need for closer cooperation between schools and employers, including control functions of the local trade unions, as well as a need for improving and enlarging the vocational schools themselves.

This is one of the tasks for the municipal SSA councils, mentioned above. Because they must maintain contact with all young people during two years after the compulsory school, they should see to it that those 16- to 18-year olds who do not enter secondary school at least get a job in which they can learn something. They must also offer educational opportunities that can motivate such youngsters to participate. As we have seen, the Employment Commission strongly recommended the development of sandwich courses. The work-life orientation courses arranged by the Labor Market Board have appeared attractive even for school-weary youth. In one way or another the municipal authorities must do the spadework to implement the "youth guarantee" that Parliament declared as a goal: All young people should be offered either jobs or training opportunities. (Note, however, the new policy for those below 18. See pp. 89-90.)

Higher Education

In 1975, the Swedish Parliament passed a bill outlining principles for a far-reaching reform of higher education. There followed detailed legislation in 1977, to be in force from July 1 of

that year. The reforms were to be based primarily on the recommendations of the 1968 University Commission (known as U-68) and of a special working party of parliamentarians who drafted the bill, as well as on the proposals of the 1972 Commission on Admissions. They concerned mainly undergraduate studies. Now postgraduate studies and research are under reorganization, too. The latter aspects are largely kept outside this presentation.

The reforms thus enacted aimed at the creation of a unitary system encompassing all types of higher education, including a wider range of specialties than those usually provided by existing universities. All postsecondary professional schools were to be integrated with the universities in one administrative system, except for the Agricultural University. Eligibility for entrance to institutions of higher education was also to be considerably liberalized. However, in order to avoid imbalances in the number of students entering different lines and to facilitate a planned allocation of resources, entrance into all parts of the system would be regulated. There was to be a central system for ordering the queues so as to promote equal treatment of applicants from all parts of the country and from different educational and employment backgrounds. Some of the courses and student places, however, should be determined in a decentralized fashion.

The change of government in 1976 did not lead to much change in the plans, except for one point. Differing from the decision of 1975, the act of 1977 left a "free sector" in which everyone who met the eligibility standards would be certain of entrance. This covered a large part of what was earlier known as the philosophy faculty, particularly economics and business administration, mathematics, etc. The most demanded and generally most costly fields (those with laboratory equipment, etc.) had always had restricted entrance because of their limited number of places, but most parts of higher education had been open to anyone who was eligible. Although the 1977 decision made the free sector smaller than in earlier times, it was still rather substantial. However, in 1979 the Center Party and the

Social Democrats reestablished the generalized regulation system.

The reformed higher education system is designed to have a more deliberate vocational orientation than previously—a compromise between a "manpower approach" and a "social demand approach." All sectors would provide knowledge and skills required for pursuing an occupation within a broadly defined field of work, along with traditional academic values, such as critical competence and understanding of scientific methods. Interaction between education, research training, and actual research would be developed within all higher education. This would hold even for professional colleges which lacked permanent research organizations.

For planning and resource allocation purposes, higher education is divided into five main occupational sectors: (1) technology; (2) administration, economy, and social services; (3) health care; (4) education; and (5) culture and information.

The act of 1975 had explicitly established *recurrent education* as a principle for the whole educational system. It stated that this principle should be gradually promoted as a realistic alternative to the traditional pattern of youth education. Therefore, work experience would provide credits for entering higher education.

Young students are, however, usually advised to follow one of the approximately 100 general *study programs,* that is, the standard combinations of subjects designed to serve a specific occupation. The length of these programs varies from 1½ to 5½ years (the latter for physicians), but the most common schedule for a first degree is 3 to 4 years, as formerly, although in practice it often took longer. The existence of these programs should facilitate both the organization of the work of higher education units and the orderly conduct of studies so as to avoid unnecessary delays in getting a degree.

There has, however, been student opposition to what they regard as overly strict rules. Efforts to establish such orderliness had largely failed in the 1960s. Students have also availed themselves of the right to take *single courses* and to combine them

toward a graduation certificate, even though these courses were intended in the first place to offer further training for persons already in some field of work. This practice is now institutionalized by making it possible for college authorities to arrange for *individual programs.* Further flexibility based on regional industrial and labor market considerations is also provided through a right for regional authorities to arrange for *local programs.*

Administration

The reforms of 1975 to 1977 implied a broad administrative reorganization and plans for a broader geographical distribution of the Swedish system of higher education. At the national level the overall responsibility for higher education lies with the National Board of Universities and Colleges (UHÄ).[6] Like other central government agencies, this is administratively independent of, but in budgetary terms subordinate to, the government (cabinet) via the Ministry of Education. In the final decision-making process, the Swedish Parliament is the highest formal authority deciding on total financial resources and their broad allocation, including the geographical location of institutions of higher education and the establishment of general study programs and related full professor chairs.

The country is divided into six regions, each with a separate regional board for higher education. Two-thirds of the board members are representatives of "public interests," that is, local government, labor and management organizations, etc. These boards have special responsibility for the programs of single courses and local and individual study lines at the universities and colleges in each region. They are also responsible for the distribution of research resources to the various institutions in each region. They promote linkages between education and

[6]In Swedish: *Universitets-och Högskole-Ämbetet.* In Sweden, *högskola* (officially translated "college") is an institution of higher education with a less complete program and less research orientation than a *university;* the colleges are also more directly geared to education and training for specific occupations and professions. *Högskola* is also used, however, as synonymous with institutions of higher education in general.

research, especially in those areas of higher education which traditionally have lacked such direct connections, for example, the training of nurses.

The logic of the arrangement is that the regional boards, with their strong extra-academic membership, are expected to provide contact between higher education and the rest of society. On the basis of economic and labor market needs, they are to provide for the development of special courses that will primarily serve persons already working. Their influence over the planning of research should promote its orientation toward needs of the respective regions. For example, there might be institutions for the study of tourism in the mountainous areas.

It must be admitted, however, that the process of creating a genuinely unitary system of higher education and research and simultaneously avoiding the risk of spreading research resources too thin is still in the formative stage. It is too early to pass judgment on the role of regional boards in this respect,[7] and their resources have been rather limited. Research funds are, however, distributed through other channels as well, for example, research councils for different fields of science and funds received by professors and postgraduate students in the faculties at large.

At the local level, there are 6 universities offering a broad range of research and study programs and about 20 colleges providing more restricted selections of programs. The governing boards of each of these institutions of higher education also include public representatives, but on these boards they have only one-third of the seats, while the other seats are reserved for academic personnel elected by units or departments within the universities and colleges.

A basic feature of the reform is its emphasis on decentralization. This implies changes in budgetary procedures. Increased freedom, as compared with former times, in the disposition of funds is given to levels below the UHÄ. There is also decentralization of decisions relating to the structuring and contents of

[7] They are often criticized as an artificial complication—a token decentralization introduced in order to get the support of the Center Party for the rest of the reform.

the components of the various study programs. In the 1960s, the annual budgets for higher education passed by Parliament specified 130 items, but these have gradually been reduced to less than 30, giving both the central and local administrative authorities increased freedom to allocate the funds they get from the state.

In the various departments within institutions of higher education, considerable responsibility is also given to staff members and to the students concerning the inner life of departments, the arrangement of courses, and the content of curricula. This is no longer a prerogative of full professors. For each discipline there is a curriculum council determining the main contents of teaching, books to be used, etc. These include full professors and also representatives of the professions, such as lawyers in the law schools, junior staff, and students. The participation of students in determining what books their professors should assign is sometimes ridiculed, but in practice this new "industrial democracy" or "codetermination" does not function very differently from the old system. Superior competence and experience continue to give the full professors much influence. This has gradually been realized by student representatives, who had already achieved some codetermination rights back in the 1960s. On the other hand, this new order sometimes serves to prevent misuse of faculty powers, such as compelling students to buy and use a professor's outdated textbook.

Political Debates

The reforms of 1975 to 1977 were not uncontested. Some of the senior professors talked of deadly threats to higher education—of the danger that bureaucratization would interfere with their concentration on their main tasks of education and research, and of the risk of undue nonacademic influence from trade unionists and other outsiders on the governing boards and from students and junior personnel in the departments. Moreover, the student bodies have to a great extent displayed opposition to the reforms: first, as early as the 1960s, to the efforts to streamline studies within a number of standardized programs in order to speed the student's progress toward a degree and, more

recently, to the new rules for access and admissions or at least to certain features of these rules.

As for the attitudes of political parties, there was a high degree of consensus in connection with earlier steps in the direction manifested in the 1977 reform. However, debate on the latter has to some extent changed this picture. The conservatives have partly sided with the professors and students in opposing what they saw as a risk of sacrificing elitist excellence for exaggerated egalitarianism. The Communists have also sided with the students in their opposition to efforts to allow the apportionment of student places to be determined, at least to some extent, by labor market considerations. This they apparently view as turning universities into service institutions for employers, instead of free academies serving the students' and professors' cultural and scientific interests.

Student opposition from left and right has been enhanced by the "teething" troubles connected with administering the new rules for access to higher education, which are widened to bring in many more persons than formerly. This opposition probably helped to explain part of the growth of votes for both Conservatives and Communists in the election of 1979. The Liberals sided with the other opponents against the decision of the parliamentary majority (the Social Democrats and the Center Party) to reintroduce the generalized entrance regulations in 1979.

New Rules for Access

The rules for access to higher education are among the most important and widely debated aspects of the university reform. It is mainly the traditional universities that are affected, because the various professional colleges outside of the universities generally continue their traditional methods of selection, since these depend on the special demands of the professions (for example, actors, journalists, and nurses). With respect to the universities, there is first a *general entitlement* in the form of certain minimum requirements relating mainly to competence in Swedish and English at levels needed for higher studies. Secondly, there are *specific entitlement criteria,* which differ among

different programs or courses, and are designed to ensure basic knowledge of the topics to be studied.

The administration of admis[illegible]s procedures for the approximately 100 study progra[illegible] computerized and centralized to ensure equal treatment o[illegible]tudents in different parts of the country. Entrance to single courses is a more local affair. Those meeting the eligibility standards for admission to programs of their choice are separated into five groups, and the number admitted is largely proportional to the number of applicants in each group. In this way the various types of qualifications are put on the same footing if there is competition for places in a certain field of study. The five groups and their general requirements are: (1) those who have completed a secondary school program of three or four years; (2) those who have completed a two-year secondary school program; (3) those who have completed a full course at a folk high school; (4) those who are at least 25 years of age and have had at least four years of work experience; and (5) those whose earlier education was outside of Sweden if they have completed at least the equivalent of group 2 (that is, two years of secondary school). This fifth group is kept outside the proportional system, and a maximum of 10 percent of the student places is available for them.

The applicants in each of the groups are ranked according to their school grades and are given additional credits for work experience, in which is included military service, care for one's own child or for a relative, or active participation in voluntary organizational work (such as trade unions, youth and sports clubs). The applicants of the "25:4" type can get extra points for additional work experience on top of the basic eligibility years and for an optional test of scholastic aptitude.

In order to avoid making work experience a too decisive factor for those in groups 1 and 2, there is a guarantee that 20 percent of the places for each of these groups will be reserved for persons basing their applications solely on their school grades. For the opposite reason, 50 percent of the places allotted to group 4 are reserved for those lacking marks from secondary schools.

The credits are so structured that work experience gives a maximum of two points, plus one-half point for participation in organizational work. Since school grades can contribute a maximum of five points, a person with only three points from school but with maximum work experience beats a person without such points but with highest marks. In some cases, notably medical schools, even this has not guaranteed entrance to those with five points for school marks, and lotteries have been used.

As mentioned above, the entrance regulations applying these rules were actually in force for only a part of the applicants in 1977–78 and 1978–79—those seeking entrance to restricted programs. Everyone who met the *general* criteria and, if needed, special criteria was admitted to programs and courses in the free sector. Restrictions on entrance and competition for places were, of course, not unknown earlier, when they were applied where places were limited by the need for laboratory space or equipment or when professional associations wanted to limit entrance. For some of these programs, there is a strict *numerus clausus* established by Parliament; in other cases, parliamentary decisions about allocations of funds to higher education make possible decentralized decisions about the number of places each unit can accommodate. Selection of applicants is, however, centralized in one system, as we have seen, to safeguard equal treatment all over the country. Beginning with fall 1979, the centralized admissions system has been applied to all programs in which the number of applicants is higher than the number of places available.

Even in the 1960s and earlier, when admission generally required a secondary school certificate *(matura* or *studentexamen),* there were other ways of entering universities. Old restrictions had gradually been liberalized, first through individual exceptions and, from 1969 on, through a larger-scale experiment under which persons at least 25 years old and with five years of work experience were given access to a large number of study lines, provided they had the necessary basic knowledge of the subject and an elementary knowledge of English. From 1969 to 1976, the application of this so-called 25:5 rule was

gradually widened, until through the 1977 reform it has been generalized on a 25:4 basis.

The proportion of new entrants admitted to the free sections on the basis of the 25:5 rule rose from about 5 percent in the initial year to almost one-fourth of the newly enrolled in the last year of the experiment. The proportion of those with a working-class background was substantially higher in the 25:5 group than for the others. Even so, disregarding the dubiousness of using parental occupation as a measure of current social status, the figures show that the majority even among the 25:5 students had a middle-class background.

One interesting side effect of the reform was that it invited people to seek university (college) entrance without intending to acquire a full degree. Thus, of all new entrants under the 25:5 rule, the proportion stating that they were not aiming at a full degree rose from about one-third in 1970 to 70 percent in 1976.

When the new rules were first applied in fall 1977, the stream of applications to the free sector grew in an unforeseen manner. In that year, free admission applied to 40 single courses and to a small number of full-study programs in economics, social service, and mathematics. Even in the restricted study programs, the number of places available was in some cases large enough to permit acceptance of all eligible applicants. Competition was, however, as keen as always in medicine, agronomy, architecture, and other similar programs.

The establishment of a generalized entrance regulation, in effect from the beginning of 1979-80, was motivated, among other things, by the view that the uninhibited expansion of some programs threatened to reduce the possibility of expanding restricted programs. Needs for expansion actually appeared to be greatest in the restricted programs, both from the point of view of social needs and the expressed needs for student places. In view of the flexibility of comprehensive regulation, it is difficult to give a precise figure for the number of places available and for those actually used. In fall 1978, the total number of entrance places was apparently about 50,000, one-half of them in single courses. A sharp increase and excess demand for

places at the beginning of 1979–80 led to improvised expansions in fields in which this was feasible. The application must have been submitted before June 15 to facilitate the selection process and the preparation of new courses in time for the fall term.

In the period of partially free and partially restricted admission from 1977 to 1979, a majority of applicants to restricted study programs were admitted on the basis of the criteria for group 1. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of all applicants were in this category. The proportion for the 25:4 group was in the neighborhood of 17 to 27 percent, most of whom, however, also qualified for some other group. Those who met only the 25:4 criterion appear to have constituted about 5 percent of the total number of applicants to the centrally monitored study programs. At the same time, the majority of applicants in groups 2, 3, and 4 had extra credits for work experience. Such experience can not be counted unless it lasted 15 months, and each job held has to be of at least 3 months' duration. Even in group 1, about 40 percent of the applicants had and have some creditable work experience.

Generally, the system appears to favor applicants who have had both secondary school studies and work experience. Thus it provides an incentive for recurrent education, assisting those who wish to enter higher education at a later stage in life than has been traditional. In fact, the system results in a situation in which a large proportion of those who otherwise would have gone directly from secondary school to higher education now have to wait a few years, because the places are taken by those who have added work experience to their educational credits. This is partly an intended effect, but it has interfered with the intention of giving 20 percent of the places to persons coming directly from secondary school. The political parties seem to be in agreement that the rules should be amended so that this intention can be carried out.

There have also been other unanticipated side effects, which some critics argue call for amendment of the rules relating to credits for participation in voluntary organizations. At least initially, these rules have tended to discriminate against

female applicants who are likely to have fewer points for such activities. Thus, they tend to impede achieving the goal of sexual equality. Another overall effect of the system—partly an unintended consequence of the basic attempt to widen the category of eligible students—has been to intensify the competition for student places in programs that were earlier already highly competitive, such as medicine.

By and large, it is still an open question whether the system has contributed to broader social recruitment or not. The effect may take some time to materialize. Consistent with the usual experience with adult participation in higher education, it is those who already have considerable educational achievement who are most likely to use the new opportunities, at least to begin with.

The effects on the highly competitive programs, such as medicine, have also been much debated. The average age of entrants to the study of medicine in 1977 and 1978 was around 30 years. In some cases, persons over age 50 have entered such studies, and it has been noted that they would not be able to give society much return on its investment in human capital during the years they would have left to work after graduation. There is clearly some validity to such criticisms, and it is probable that the rules will be modified to some extent.

There are also other unforeseen difficulties that require attention, such as those associated with the complicated computerized selection process, involving the five-group classification with its complex rules and the effort to achieve interregional equity. Applicants often try to improve their chances by applying to several study lines at once, sometimes up to as many as 12. If they do get into a program that they do not really want, they frequently drop out at the beginning of the term, but those who might then be accepted in their place cannot be informed until after the term has already begun.

Although there will clearly be amendments to the rules, the parliamentary majority cannot be expected to retreat from the basic principles of the reform. There is, for example, a strong conviction that it is neither rational nor equitable to lure the best theoretical brains to such studies as medicine and dentistry, not because these able persons have special aptitudes for

human contacts or manual dexterity, but because these fields still have shortages and, as a result, above-normal income levels. There is a long-run policy to reduce the monopolistic privileges associated with such occupations through further expansion of training facilities, but already recruitment is becoming based more on experience with human contacts, like those in nursing, than on a capacity for assimilation of textbooks. Experienced nurses can now compete successfully with graduates of secondary schools for entrance to medical studies and are also offered shorter programs for qualification as physicians. For teachers as well, there is increasing emphasis on making work experience a precondition for entrance to teacher training, both because of the increased importance given to teaching young people about working life in the schools and because of the need for better understanding between teachers and pupils from different social backgrounds.

It must be stressed that the regulation of entrance to higher education is not motivated by a desire to hold down the number of entrants for any reason other than budgetary constraints. Taxpayers cannot be expected to provide money willingly for higher education and research without any limits. Those programs with the greatest excess demand for student places will probably receive increasing resources on the basis of a compromise between satisfying the demand and projections of future need, assuming there is a discrepancy between these criteria. The actual demand for places is likely to be given considerable weight, while maladjustments of demand and supply will be met by improved vocational counseling aimed at persuading students to prepare for those occupations in which demand is rising. Experience in the past several decades has demonstrated the precarious nature of occupational forecasts, the great adaptability of people with the "wrong" training, and the extreme sensitivity of students to changes in occupational demand. Sometimes, in fact, this sensitivity appears too great, leading to overreaction to small and temporary changes in the labor market situation.

(P.S. June 1980. Parliament has now changed the access rules described above. From 1981 on, 30 instead of 20 percent will be admitted (in the relevant groups) on the basis of school

marks only. From 1982 on, the importance of work experience will be reduced: The maximum for such points will be 1.7 instead of 2.5, and the possibility of counting activities in organizations as a point-giving merit will be eliminated. The reduction of the weight to be given to work experience was opposed by the opposition parties in Parliament.)

Relation to the Labor Market

There were a number of misleading forecasts about the academic labor market in the 1950s and the early 1960s, indicating large oversupplies of graduates in a situation in which what actually developed were large shortages. The methodology for such forecasts has been strengthened and hopefully improved, so as to provide better guidance to vocational advisers. Improved information about local government plans for public service expansion—an important part of the demand for academic manpower—along with other improvements in occupational statistics should have increased the reliability of the forecasts. Those for the 1970s have been more reliable than those of earlier periods, but they are still based to a large extent on extrapolations with limited possibilities for predicting pronounced deviations from observed trends.

Thus, the efforts to influence the flow of students into various occupations through the new system for allocation of study slots and regulation of entrance should not be viewed as based on manpower planning guided by forecasts. Apart from the case of professions with a long time span between the beginning of studies and completion of those studies, and for which the number of jobs is largely determined by public authorities and thereby in principle foreseeable—such as school teachers, physicians, and dentists—the guiding principle should rather be preparedness for rapid adjustment to unforeseen changes whenever these occur.

An important contribution to such adaptability is obviously provided by the large number of supplementary courses of all sorts included in the system of higher education. Moreover, adjustment to changing labor market situations in various parts of the country should be enhanced by the freedom now given to

regional and local higher education authorities to arrange such courses on an ad hoc basis, whenever they perceive a need.

The adaptability of the system is also enhanced by the broader geographical distribution of institutions of higher education. In addition, there is a systematic promotion of *distance studies.* These make it possible for persons who do not live in one of the 20 municipalities in which there are institutions of higher education to participate in university-level study circles and correspondence courses, keeping in touch with teachers, through letters, telephone, tape-recorded lectures, and intermittent short courses on a campus.

Another application of the emphasis on adaptability is the opportunity for academic graduates to participate in labor market training under the auspices of the Labor Market Board. Like all other jobseekers whose chances of getting a suitable job in a reasonable time appears limited, these persons can be admitted to retraining courses. The order of magnitude of the number of participants in such academic retraining is about 1,000 persons a year. Their anxieties are perhaps alleviated to some extent by the fact that they receive more generous financial support than ordinary college students.

Thus, in spite of the absence of strict manpower planning, the reform of higher education in Sweden is based to a high degree on labor market considerations. The unified system with its study programs and single courses is intended to facilitate the student's path from education to working life and also his return to studies. The system of public representation on regional and institutional boards is intended to ensure closer links between higher education and both social and working life. The experimental 25:5 rule and the new admissions system of 1977 were explicitly designed to promote a pattern of recurrent education. But recurrent education also implies increased adaptability to rapid labor market changes.

At times in the past discrepancies have developed between supply and demand for university graduates. For example, there was a rapid growth of enrollment in university-type institutions in the 1950s and 1960s—from 17,000 in 1950 to 120,000 in 1970. The proportion of 19- and 20-year olds enrolled increased

from less than 5 percent in 1950 to almost 25 percent in 1970. Using for purposes of international comparability the OECD definition of higher education, the proportion in 1970 could be estimated at slightly below 40 percent. The figures for new entrants grew in a similar manner. This development, however, ceased in 1970, and a declining trend ensued until 1973-74, especially in humanities and social sciences and other fields in which there was free entrance for all those who were basically eligible. The restricted faculties and schools grew slowly and filled their available student places accordingly. In the free fields, the number of new entrants seems to have gone down from approximately 30,000 to below 20,000 between the peak year 1968-69 and the trough year 1973-74. This was partly explained by a decline of the youth population and by the changed rules for military service and examinations, which exaggerated the peak, but there was also a marked decline in the demand for higher education.

In the mid-1970s, the trend shifted upward again. Enrollment in higher education institutions (according to the enlarged definition applicable since 1977) has been around 45,000 a year from 1977 to 1979. About one-third of these go to single courses, most for part-time studies. In 1978 the total enrollment was 172,300 (Table 19). In comparable terms, higher education activities as a whole, as well as annual entrance numbers, now probably have passed the peak level of the late 1960s. On the other hand we are now in a period of decreasing postgraduate studies. Although explicable by the low entrance figures of the early 1970s, pessimists see here a more serious decline of interest in research.

All in all, about 50 percent of each cohort appears likely sooner or later to enter some sort of higher education. This may appear as a contradiction to the figures of Table 19, which show only about 11 percent of the 20- to 24-age group enrolled in postsecondary studies in 1978. This is explained by the fact that nearly one-half of all new entrants to higher education come in after their 25th birthday. These do, however, stay for shorter periods of time, which explains the relatively rapid decline of enrollment figures after this age. If the total enrollment

at present is assumed to be 180,000 and if everyone stays on the average three years (probably nowadays an exaggeration), they would represent an annual inflow of new entrants by 60,000 a year, that is about one-half the size of one cohort.

A psychological reason for the reduced inflow to the universities in the early 1970s was the general loosening of the labor market that occurred in Sweden in 1971–72, with unemployment doubling (to 2.7 percent) for the entire labor force and also for the 20- to 24-age group. Such reaction appears rather irrational. The young people involved would have been better off prolonging their education and postponing entrance to the labor market until conditions improved instead of adding themselves to the queue of unemployed.

It is sometimes claimed that a structural labor market problem has developed for university graduates in the 1970s and that this, among other things, has discouraged young people from entering the universities. In fact, an appreciable rise in unemployment rates for university graduates did occur in the early 1970s—a rise that was more pronounced than for persons aged 20 to 24 in general or for those with only a secondary school certificate.[8] For those who graduated in 1970–71, the unemployment rate six months after graduation was over 4 percent, for a shorter period maybe even higher. The rate was highest for those with a degree in the humanities. Moreover, three years after graduation many graduates found themselves in occupations other than those for which they had been studying. After a few years, however, unemployment was again clearly lower for graduates than for others in the same age group. During the slack years, a number of graduates had had to wait a few months before getting a job, something that was very different from the situation in the 1960s. In fact, the predictions for employment opportunities of graduates had already begun in the late 1960s to indicate a more balanced situation than

[8]Central Bureau of Statistics, *Trends and Forecasts—Population, Education, and the Labor Market in Sweden,* 1977:1, Table 2:4:6; and *Student Flows Through the Educational System and Number of Students Entering the Labor Market, Projection to 1990,* 1977:4, Table 6.4.

earlier shortages, and decisions to enter higher education appeared to be very sensitive to such signals.

Thus, one form of adjustment was not to enter higher education. Another was downward adjustment of expectations of graduates with respect to the status and salary levels of jobs. Within the civil service, formal eligibility requirements for positions have been changed. Graduates now must start civil service careers at a lower level in terms of status and salary than in the 1960s, when there was a high demand for their services. The development toward greater importance of internal labor markets and of work experience in private enterprises, moreover, has definitely caused graduates to commence work at lower levels in both the public and private sectors.[9] Statistics confirm the fact that initial salaries for new graduates stagnated and even declined. This does not necessarily imply that their possibilities for later advancement have diminished.

Another question is to what extent the increased outflow of persons with higher education in the early 1970s may have impaired the labor market outlook for other groups of young people. This possibility is sometimes mentioned.[10] No doubt, there is a connection between the appearance of increased numbers of graduates from both universities and secondary schools and increased unemployment among the unskilled and those without schooling beyond the compulsory level. Whether this is a cause-and-effect relationship, however, is not clear. It may also be that the disappearance of shortages of persons with advanced qualifications has contributed to economic expansion that is beneficial for persons with lesser qualifications as well. On the other hand, if there is unemployment, it tends to be concentrated on those with less schooling. If these are a declining proportion of total employment, one can imagine that their unemployment rates rise to high levels, while those with certificates of advanced study stay unemployed only for short periods.

[9] See Ministry of Labor, *Labor Market in Transition*, English Summary of a Report from EFA (The Expert Group for Labor Market Research), 1978.

[10] Ante Farm, *Report on the Youth Employment Service Experiment*, Institute for Social Research, 1978.

The latter usually have a possibility of choosing a job at a lower level than that which has been traditional for their qualifications, but those without skills and education do not have the opposite possibility of upgrading their choices. Only in some specific cases do employers prefer young people without more than basic school over those who are "overqualified" by theoretical education. More often they seem to prefer those with immediately usuable dexterities, for example, typing, over those with higher education, who have to supplement their education with such skills. The predominant picture, however, is of an inverse relationship between educational level and umemployment rates. Thus, the large outflow from universities may have contributed to a slow trickle-down process, with the result that those with the least education have been most afflicted by unemployment, while the graduates have experienced a decline in earnings levels, at least in relative terms.

About half of the increase in youth unemployment from 1976 to 1978 consisted of young people who had had some secondary education, but usually less than three years. This increase in youth unemployment adversely affects the chances of these young people to compete for admission to higher education under the new rules. Critics have urged that the rules be made more sensitive to the needs of this category of youth who are disadvantaged in attaining work experience credits. In fact, the programs for public service employment for young people represent one way of meeting this need.

Official forecasts of the future labor market situation for university graduates predict an aggregative balance during the coming two decades. Some problems will arise, however, for those with a background in the behavioral sciences, whereas the outlook is for a balance between demand and supply for persons with a background in various areas of administrative, economic, and social higher education. This reflects the plans for expansion of public service activities in local government—if these can be fulfilled in view of the heightened financial difficulties of all public authorities. There will, however, be a large surplus of students with training for cultural and informational professions throughout the entire 1980s. When the forecasts are broken

down in greater detail, both excess and deficit demand in particular fields are predicted.

The authors of this study (from the Forecasting Institute) stress the hypothetical character of their activity.[11] "These discrepancies," they state, "do *not* mean that so and so many persons will be unemployed and that the number of vacant jobs will be this or that high. Instead the discrepancies indicate that some students must take jobs for which they lack training and the number of jobs in which persons with inadequate training will have to be placed." Furthermore, students will take the forecasts into account in their vocational choices and the planning authorities in the educational system "will naturally . . . change the capacity of this or that specific training and thereby remove the basis for this projection, at least for the period beyond 1985."

This sounds as if there actually was real manpower planning of the provision of places in both secondary and higher education. The very decentralization of the system, however, implies that conformity between the predictions and the plans will be rather limited. Probably the new capacity for rapid adjustment to unforeseen changes, by the school and labor market authorities arranging and by workers entering specialized courses at any age level will contribute to maintaining balance in the various labor markets, just as much as planning at more central levels.

The Integration Between the Sexes and Among Social Groups

Under the new definition of higher education, which includes the special schools for nurses, artists, etc., that were outside the old university concept, we find that women were in the majority (54 percent) among entrants in 1975–76, and, in fact, a majority that had grown somewhat since 1965–66. Men were in the majority (55 percent) in the "traditional" universities, even

[11] Central Bureau of Statistics, *Number of Students Leaving the Educational System and the Labor Market Recruitment Need for Manpower—Forecast to 1990,* 1978:3.

though the share of women here had also grown by a few percentage points. In other words, women were a large majority of those in the new system outside of the traditional university.[12]

The share of women among entrants to higher education rose steadily during the experimental period from 1969 to 1976 for the 25:5 rule; it was 39 percent in the fall of 1969 and 52 percent in the fall of 1975. This development, however, was partly due to a gradual extension of the 25:5 rule to humanistic and general study courses, in which women are particularly likely to enroll.

Women are clearly underrepresented in the technical sector and somewhat underrepresented in the administrative, economics, and social sectors. Over a ten-year period, however, the share of women has risen considerably in the sectors in which they had been underrepresented and diminished considerably in the health care sector, except for medicine and dentistry. The new shortened training program for nurses who want to become physicians can be expected to increase the proportion of women in the medical profession.

Further efforts to promote equality between the sexes in higher education are underway. A special working party of UHÄ has concerned itself with the formulation of appropriate measures and policies toward this end. A constant problem is the underrepresentation of women in postgraduate studies—women constituted only 26 percent of all graduate students in the fall term of 1978, and this figure had been roughly unchanged throughout the 1970s.

In addition, the new rules granting extra credits for active work in civic organizations, as we have seen, have negatively affected the chances of female applicants to get into highly competitive study programs. Thus, there seems to be a reduced proportion of women in several lengthy programs, such as medicine. If this continues to be the case, the rules will probably be changed.

[12] Lillemor Kim, *Admission to Higher Education: The Second Report*, UHÄ, 1978:18, p. 25. (English translation of Swedish title)

On the whole, it must be emphasized that the entire higher education reform is subject to a great number of follow-up research projects designed to evaluate its results in every conceivable respect and then to apply the principle of a "rolling reform."

As for the social background of the students, we have already noted that the 25:5 students enrolled from 1969 to 1976 were more likely to have a working-class background than traditional students, but even so, working-class students were a minority of all 25:5 students. All in all, students from working-class homes increased their share in higher education to 20 percent, compared to 15 percent at the beginning of the 1970s. This development was certainly related to the rise in real incomes and to the gradual reforms in the system for financing studies beyond compulsory school in the postwar period. The skewness is still substantial, however, especially among people continuing their studies toward an academic degree *and* in the restricted programs.

It is difficult to form a consistent picture of developments during the 1970s. In fact, sample surveys of 23-year olds born in 1948 and in 1953, as well as other data, suggest increased social differentiation during the 1970s, at least up to 1976. It seems to have been particularly the youth with working-class backgrounds (with a high risk aversion) who overreacted to the risks of an oversupply of academic graduates appearing in the early 1970s. The results of the 1977 reform in these respects cannot yet be determined.[13]

An analysis of changes in participation in different fields of study indicates that "upper" social groups have substantially increased their shares in humanities and social sciences and in some short postsecondary education programs. On the other hand, there seems to be a slight tendency for "lower" social groups to increase their (very low) share in the most attractive lines of study. Nevertheless, social background continues to have a very strong influence on participation patterns.

[13] Allan Svensson, *Equality Under Way?* UHÄ report 1979:9, pp. 14–20.

Of special interest is the effect of recent changes in the entrance criteria on admission to restricted lines. Applicants with three to four years of secondary education obtained three-fourths of the places in restricted lines in fall 1978. Only 4 percent of the places in these programs went to persons eligible solely on the basis of age and work experience. In both cases, this accords with the shares of the two groups among applicants.

The greatest changes brought about by the reform occurred *within* the group of secondary school graduates. Because work experience was a criterion in selection, a shift occurred favoring secondary school graduates with such experience. This explains the growth of the average age of new entrants. Older applicants are displacing the applicants who have to wait for their turn.

At least in the short run, one should not expect dramatic effects of the new access rules on the social composition of the university and college population. As we noted earlier, it is always those who already have some educational or economic advantages who are the first to be both able and interested in utilizing new openings. A basis is created, however, for activities (by the free educational associations and other broadly based organizations, education and vocational counselors, and employment service officers) to advise possible candidates to prepare themselves for broader utilization of the new chances within the framework of recurrent education that has been created.

A Note on Democratization and Decentralization

Our discussion of the changes in Sweden's higher education system should at least give some indication of the ways in which Sweden is trying to reconcile a number of partly conflicting objectives. On the one hand, there is increased decentralization, so as to provide influence for both the representatives of democracy external to higher education (political authorities, labor, management, etc.) and of those internal (professors, etc.). On the other hand, there is coordinated planning for a rational and equitable allocation of the financial resources which the central political authorities consider a sensible use of the taxpayers' money. Actually, part of this decentralized influence existed

earlier in the form of a high degree of autonomy for full professors and faculty assemblies. There have also been elements of student "codetermination," as we have seen, since the upheavals of 1968.

In a way, these changes can be viewed as involving a loss of autonomy from the point of view of previously relatively independent authorities, particularly the senior professors. But the time has passed when scientific progress and its transmission to new generations could be based on a small number of professors, each with access to a library and perhaps a little laboratory, and with a small group of devoted students sitting at his feet. Both research and higher education are now big industries with very costly inputs. The taxpayers, as we commented earlier, deserve a say in the process of determining expenditures. The decentralization that has occurred can be seen as a new form of pluralism. If local power is misused by incompetence or political bias, the proliferation of organs for decision making appears to be a guarantee that freedom of scientific research and objectivity of academic teaching can continue to be protected through other channels, in the process of mutual scrutiny that is a basic aspect of academic freedom.

Concluding Remarks on Education

We have tried to describe Swedish educational reforms in recent decades with particular attention to two of their main goals, i.e., a better relationship with working life and the elimination of educational choices and career patterns based on traditional class structure and prejudices. Educational policy has, along with other components of social policy, undoubtedly considerably increased the general level of skill and knowledge among those going from school to work. Furthermore, it has obviously changed the preconditions for social mobility and recruitment patterns in the choice of education and occupation to an extent that, at least in the realm of intersexual equality, is unique in the world.

The picture is not, however, unambiguously positive. The distribution of the two sexes and the various social groups among different study lines and levels of educational attainment

has not changed with the expected speed. The new admission rules have often favored groups other than those they were intended to help. Even if unemployment has been kept low, by international comparison, increased youth unemployment rates (at times even for university graduates) indicate that Swedish society has not been entirely successful in adapting educational policy to the labor market and vice versa. The tendencies toward "squeezing" more people out of the labor market, discussed in other parts of this volume, can be traced back to the school system to a certain extent.

The existence of goal conflicts of course constitutes a dilemma. This includes conflicts between the more general and traditional goals of education and the goals of the more recent reforms. The attempts to broaden the social composition of students in higher education may have led to negative impacts on educational standards, at least temporarily. Discipline problems and unrest, although concentrated in a minority of schools, particularly in the big cities, imply that the policy of prolonged compulsory education has had unwanted side effects. Goals for working life, in addition, are too unspecified to exclude internal goal conflicts, for example, between flexibility and specialization of the labor force.

Some readers may have searched here for a discussion of the political controversies over the reform policy in education. My defense for the absence of such discussion (with the exceptions of the reference to the controversies about the 1975–1977 university reforms) is that there have scarcely been any deep disagreements in Sweden about the reform policy. There are those who feel that the policy issues have been handed over to experts to a too high extent and that the politicians have disagreed too little. However, there are signs that this consensus period is over. The Social Democrats and the Conservative party are the main opponents in a growing educational debate that concerns both the questions of the right means and of goal priorities. The Conservatives emphasize the failure of the schools to cope satisfactorily with discipline problems (recognized as such by all, but with different views on counteraction), the traditional goals of education, and belief in the importance of

marks as an incentive for diligence. The Social Democrats appear as the main defenders of the reform strategy based on the principles of latest possible separation into different streams, democratized cooperation with pupils, recurrent education, and contacts with social and working life as part of the curricula.

There is general agreement that at least some local school authorities have been too lenient, permitting disorderly conduct and lack of firm norms for pupils and teachers to hamper the fundamental task of providing the young with the basic skills they need for working life and further learning.

The IEA investigations about 1970 showed not only that educational achievements in Swedish schools were at levels similar to those in other countries, but they also showed that inequalities among different areas are particularly small in Sweden. In the 1979 OECD examination of Swedish education, the examiners pointed to the risk that the recent decentralization of school and college management would lead to increased inequality and segregation to the detriment of the underprivileged. The Swedish representatives, recognizing this danger, indicated that the national authorities can interfere if things go wrong. Hitherto, this "interference" has largely had the form of advice.

The hope is, of course, that the positive aspect of decentralization will dominate. Already a variety of ideas, which I have discussed in part in this essay, are being applied in different places. After the ensuing experiences are evaluated, the better ones should be used more widely.

Outside observers, e.g., Pedersen and Hunter, 1980, often note that the problems of Sweden are not uncommon in the industrialized world at large. To a great extent, these problems come naturally during and after a period of rapid expansion of access to education at all levels. They may have become particularly visible in connection with our ambitious rolling reforms.

Swedish Acronyms

AKU: *Arbetskraftundersökningar* (Labor Force sample surveys)
ALC: *Arbetslivscentrum* (Center for the Study of Working-Life Problems)
ALU: *Arbetsliv och utbildning* (Work-life training courses)
AMS: *Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen* (National Labor Market Board)
AMU: *Arbetsmarknadsutbildning* (Labor market training courses)
BRÅ: *Brottsförebyggande rådet* (Crime Prevention Council)
EFA: *Expertgruppen för arbetsmarknadsfrågor* (Expert Group for Labor Market Questions)
ERU: *Expertgruppen för regionalpolitisk utredningsverksamhet* (Expert Group for Regional Policy Studies)
KOMVUX: *Kommunal vuxenutbildning* (Municipal Adult Education)
LO: *Landsorganisationen* (Swedish Trade Union Confederation)
PRAO: *Praktisk arbetslivsorientering* (Practical Work-Life Orientation)
PRYO: *Praktisk yrkesorientering* (Practical Vocational Orientation)
SACO/SR: *Sveriges Akademikers Centralorganisation och Statstjänstemännens Riksförbund* (Central Organization of Academic Professionals and [higher] Civil Servants)
SAF: *Svenska Arbetsgivareföreningen* (The Swedish Employers' Confederation)

SCB: *Statistiska Centralbyrån* (Central [National] Bureau of Statistics)

SIFO: *Svenska Institutet för Opinionsundersökningar* (Swedish Institute for Social Research)

SOFI: *Institutet för social forskning* (Swedish Institute for Social Research)

SÖ: *Skolöverstyrelsen* (National Board of Education)

SYO: *Studie- och Yrkesorientering* (Study and vocational orientation)

TCO: *Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation* (Central Organization of Salaried Employees)

UHÄ: *Universitets-och högskile-ämbetet* (National Board of Universities and Colleges)

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[1]These are all in Swedish but give publication titles (as here), table headings, or key words in English, sometimes also summaries.

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Part Two

Denmark

by K. Helveg Petersen

5

Youth Unemployment in Denmark

If one looks at Europe in general, it is easy to find certain commonalities of the youth unemployment problem:

- Unemployment among youths is more serious than unemployment generally. On the average, 35 percent of unemployed people in the European Economic Community are under 25. The percentage varies from country to country; for example, it is 28 percent in West Germany and 44 percent in Great Britain.
- Over the past two years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of young people who have been unemployed for more than six months.
- Young women, especially in the age group 20 to 25, are harder hit by unemployment than are young men.
- In a number of European countries, there will be a considerable rise in the number of young people reaching the age of employment between 1978 and 1980. Their numbers will greatly exceed those of people who will reach pensionable age during the same period. In fact, the number of people about to retire will decline. These trends suggest that youth unemployment will remain a continuing problem over the next ten years.

What has been done to combat this deplorable state of affairs? In most countries, including Denmark, the widespread

feeling has been that youth unemployment was of an intermediate character, and the steps taken in response have been in line with this view. Now attitudes have changed, and it is generally accepted that economic difficulties will continue and that there are no easy solutions to the employment problem.

A summary of the initiatives taken to combat youth unemployment, in Denmark as well as in other countries, reveals two basic tendencies: (1) orientation and guidance relating to occupational opportunities have been expanded and (2) attempts have been made to expand educational facilities preparing young people for jobs—not only in training for skilled workers--but also in providing a period of preparation for those who need it before they start actual training for skilled jobs. (Courses of the latter kind have been started in many countries, including Denmark.)

Data on Youth Unemployment

The precise number of unemployed young people in Denmark is difficult to determine, but employment authorities estimate it at about 45,000 for those 15 to 24 years old. This figure, however, must be viewed with reservations. There is uncertainty as to how many unemployed young people register with the employment offices, but it is certain that unemployment among the young is much more frequent than among older people. Generally, the Ministry of Labor concludes that, although young people 15 to 24 account for only about one-fifth of the labor force, they account for almost one-third of unemployment. The reasons for the larger share of unemployment among young people include, among others, the tendency to take into account the family position of the employee when it comes to dismissals. Those who have families to care for are kept on more often than younger workers who have no families. Further, those who were most recently hired are the first to be laid off.

The majority of the youthful unemployed have limited educational attainment. Moreover, the highest unemployment rates are found among those who have previously had social or

educational difficulties. According to data from the Danish Statistical Bureau for February 1975, about 23 percent of unskilled young workers who had left school at the end of the seventh or eighth grade were unemployed, compared with approximately 12 percent of skilled young people and about 11 percent of those who had received further education. Experience has also shown that young people who leave school early are not easily motivated for further education later in life; thus it is obvious that it is not possible to solve the youth unemployment problem by extending the school-leaving age or by offering continued educational training.

Many people continue to believe that the present unemployment situation is a temporary crisis. Thus, many attempts to combat unemployment have focused on keeping unemployed young people out of the labor market until society can absorb them in employment. These measures—such as continued schooling and various after-school activities—are so planned that they can be interrupted if and when occupational opportunities change. Most young people who take part in courses or enroll at a folk high school must sign a paper indicating that they are willing to interrupt their education if work is offered to them. This means that education is considered a way of combatting unemployment by preventing young people's working capacity from deteriorating while employment is unavailable.

The question is whether we can expect conditions to improve and, if so, whether we should continue to view education as a temporary unemployment measure.

We must remember that the majority of the unemployed—young as well as older people—belong to social groups that communicate poorly with the educational system: It is not possible to motivate them toward starting school again after leaving. Statistics indicate that only a small portion of unemployed people have participated in activities arranged for the unemployed. For instance, during the period from May to November 1975, only 2,300 out of approximately 43,000 unemployed aged 15 to 24 participated in educational alternatives.

Often one hears the argument that the unemployed, whether young or older, are not very keen on getting jobs but are content to receive unemployment benefits. There is no real substance to this argument. On the contrary, the predominant view among the unemployed is that work is worthwhile and unemployment is considered an evil regardless of the economic conditions. This is implied in the question, "What are you?"—a question that is always directed at what a person does in his working life. The question that is raised in schools—"What do you want to be?"—also illustrates the situation. Indeed, it is considered degrading to have to answer "What are you?" with "I am unemployed."

If one were to outline a sequence of events typical of unemployed young people, it would look like this:

1. Drop out of school early
2. Work as an unskilled young worker
3. Be dismissed when exceeding the age that represents the passage to adult status
4. Register as unemployed to receive unemployment benefits
5. Transfer to the social department when the period for receiving unemployment benefits expires
6. Participate in orientation-to-work courses especially arranged for the unemployed
7. Participate in educational activities for the unemployed
8. Participate in other arrangements for the unemployed
9. Back to unemployment.

Some Danish Experiments

Youth unemployment cannot be eliminated through a single effort. To be effective, the solution must be coordinated with development in society, and this view predominates in the Danish government. Several experiments have been carried out in Denmark and have succeeded in creating considerable motivation and interest among youths. These projects have a number of different activities, so that the young people can see the interrelationship between practical theoretical training. In this respect, the experiments differ considerably from traditional

public work schemes, which usually consist of only one activity, such as planting trees or moving earth from one place to another.

Aabæk Continuation School

Located in the southern part of Jutland, near Aabenraa, the Aabæk Continuation School has been so successful that more than 800 people are on a waiting list to be accepted as students. The campus itself is an old farm and is quite primitive, and students and teachers do all the necessary work to maintain the farm and school, including agricultural work; fishing, furniture repair, boatbuilding, automobile repair, and other productive activities.

Closely associated with the practical work is the training received by the students. Experience has shown that it is quite easy to create interest in education when the education is directly motivated by work experiences. As soon as students see the necessity of learning to read and write, they acquire an attitude quite different from the one they had as students in a formal school. The guiding principle is that the students must produce things that are necessary for survival. The very fact that necessity forces them to act creates quite a different atmosphere at the school from that at one where the student follows a certain uniform curriculum. Each young person works in a group to which he or she is responsible, and the groups are responsible to each other and to the school as a unit.

Life at the school has a meaning, and this meaningfulness gives the young person's entire stay a specific character. Many youngsters who were quite incapable of adapting to a regular school flourish here, and the contact between the school and the community helps greatly in getting the students placed in jobs in the surrounding areas.

The Schools in Tvind

About 200 kilometers north of Aabenraa, we find a vast campus on which an experiment has developed that encompasses a continuation school for students 14 to 18, a folk high school, and a teacher training college. In all, there are about 1,000 students.

Associated with this campus, schools have been developed farther to the north and south, so that a system is developing. The principle is very much the same as at Aabæk, involving a combination of practical and theoretical work. One-half of the time is devoted to various occupational activities; the other half of the time is devoted to theoretical learning. Various groups are trained as auto mechanics, fishermen, farmers, journalists, nutritionists, office workers, energy technicians, gardeners, construction workers, and so on. All of the training is practical. The groups training to be auto mechanics, for example, purchase cars, repair them, and sell them again. The fish that are caught are either consumed at the school or sold at auction. Vegetables, dairy products, and meat go to the school kitchen. Journalists receive guests who want to see the campus. Clerical trainees keep the accounts, answer telephones, distribute mail, and keep records on the automobiles. The energy technicians work on providing inexpensive energy, including experimenting with the use of solar energy. Construction groups take part in repairing old buildings and constructing new ones. In addition, more traditional disciplines are taught, such as Danish, English, German, arithmetic, and physics.

One of the schools on the campus is called "The Traveling Folk High School." Starting with one bus, this experiment has been constantly expanding, so that the campus now has about 70 busses. Groups of students travel all over the world to gather first-hand impressions. They learn about an area by staying with native people and then move on to other places. The experience leads to a better understanding of current problems and developmental issues, especially about conditions in poor countries.

The third part of the campus is the teacher training college, but it differs greatly from regular teacher training colleges. Great emphasis is placed on the practical work experiences of the students. For several years preceding final training, they take part in production and visit offices and factories. After having gained these impressions of working life through personal experience, they begin the regular course of studies for the final examination in teacher training.

The Tvind experiment has aroused great interest and has had astonishing results creating immense interest among youths. Among the students' most unusual achievements are the building of the largest windmill in the world and the building of their own houses without assistance. Activities like these show that talent and ideas are available, waiting to be used.

There are other experiments, primarily in Jutland, that follow the same principles. At the Production School in Vamdrup, textile production has begun, modeled on the same departments that would be found in a commercial firm: a purchasing department, a sales department, and so on. There are similar experiments at Sorø, Herlev, Kofoed's Training School, and other folk high schools. In these settings, the principles mentioned above are constantly being implemented in new ways.

Difficulties Created by the Parent Administration

Although results have been achieved by some of these experiments, a number of plans and ideas have foundered because the administrative system, centrally and locally, has not provided necessary support for new initiatives. In fact, the laws and administrative rules are often far too restrictive and do not provide sufficient opportunity for this type of pioneer work.

There has been criticism of the rules and regulations. In a critique of educational laws, for example, light is shed on the laws regulating continuation schools and folk high schools. The existing laws provide that support can be given for educational materials, but these materials must be of a traditional kind (such as books, paper, and so on) and cannot include materials used in practical work. Generally speaking, many of the laws dealing with educational problems are out of date, and attempts to revise them in order to take advantage of new challenges are often inadequate.

One of the greatest administrative obstacles is that, legally, experimental schools are not allowed to produce because it is feared that they will create unfair competition for existing industrial activities. Yet production has been undertaken in some of the experiments on a limited scale, simply because it has

been necessary in order for the schools to survive. Along the same lines is the notion that unemployed youths cannot be allowed to carry out work in the public sector that would otherwise be carried out by normally employed adults. This means, in fact, that youths are excluded from a lot of meaningful work in public service employment. In addition, the administration of measures to combat unemployment is extremely complicated, because funds for these efforts and staff people who implement them come from various sources, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and other institutions.

A number of local boards have been established, with representatives from the various administrative departments, and this has sometimes resulted in a rather cumbersome mechanism. On the whole, there is a lack of competence in this complicated system and a great need for simplification. Ultimately, if we want to achieve full employment for young people, laws and administrative rules must be revised accordingly.

Suggestions for the Future

One of the objections that could be raised to the experiments we have described is that they are residential institutions in which the students live together in a community. It is feared that only a limited number of young people will participate in these projects, because most young people want to stay in their own communities rather than move to a distant place. For this reason, an ambitious scheme is being considered, whereby centers would be established all over the country so that young people could work while living at home.

It is characteristic of the development of society that over time, more and more institutions are established, each with specific tasks relating to education, social service, and health services. There is a great need for coordination of these functions, but tradition tends to maintain a separation of institutions. In Denmark it is hard to find a specific need that is not covered by some specialized institution—school, social institution, cultural institution, or other.

In cities, in other countries as well as in Denmark, certain common patterns have developed. As one approaches a city, one finds exhibits of various merchandise—furniture, campers, boats, agricultural machinery, and automobiles. Next one finds a large number of gasoline stations. Then one arrives at the city itself, with its numerous shops offering all sorts of goods in great quantity. There are enterprises offering the public things to eat, things to wear, things to be used in the household, and luxury items, all in one confusing mixture. But can one find public places where one can engage in painting, exercising, playing musical instruments, and so on? In a normal city, or even in a village, we can satisfy specialized material demands, but when it comes to demands that are less clearly formulated it is quite different. In fact, we encounter problems associated with the changing structure of society.

In Denmark, as in other countries, the distance an individual must travel to reach shops and services in local communities is often substantial. This is especially true in rural districts and on small islands, but it is also the situation in other communities. The geographical distances have tended to increase, and many people—especially the elderly and the handicapped—have difficulty obtaining goods and arranging for services such as painting, electrical work, equipment repairs, and the like. They also encounter difficulties in filling out forms and applications and, in many cases, feel quite uncertain in their relations with public authorities.

In large new housing projects, with adjacent concentrated areas for shops and service establishments, all the local inhabitants are in good health, have cars, television sets, washing machines, and even toolboxes. Moreover, they have the time and ability to carry out necessary household tasks. But this is not the case for society as a whole. Changes in the structure of society have created new needs: help to people who are ill and help for old and handicapped people in carrying out functions that are difficult for them, because they have trouble in getting to the places to which they need to go.

If the present trend continues, there will be an increasing demand for services to the elderly, the handicapped, and others

for whom the necessities of life are less accessible. When we consider a situation in which, on the one hand, a number of needs are not being met and, on the other, people are unemployed—especially youths—a new way of thinking that will bring these two forces together is called for.

In addition to the specific needs that have been mentioned, a number of other needs might be considered in light of the youth unemployment problem.

Alternative Energy Sources

Scattered experiments are being conducted on the development and use of energy from the sun, the wind, and the earth. These could be multiplied if centers all over the country would carry them out. Clearly there would be a need for technical assistance, but that is not a problem, because there are unemployed engineers and technicians who could be of assistance in these projects.

Recycling

There are also many possibilities to collect materials from the demolition of buildings, from old cars, and from other sources. At many of the experiments discussed earlier, recycling activities are considerable.

Repair Services

It would be most helpful if automobiles and appliances could be repaired in a less expensive manner. It should be possible to initiate programs whereby young people would receive limited training to take on some of the repair jobs that do not require the services of highly skilled mechanics. Indeed, the capabilities of young people, even without formal training, in such tasks as repairing busses and building houses are already very impressive. This has been demonstrated in the experiments and would be possible with a great many more young people.

Innovation and Development of Products

One of the trends to arise from the experiments is the development of great talent among young people in dealing with practical tasks. Future planning of efforts to combat unemployment

should take this into account. What would be more natural than to call on the capabilities that are available among young people in order to provide more possibilities for their development. The leading principle should be the "small is beautiful" idea, that is, the development of a technology that is more human. One of the characteristics of the present technology is that it is more efficient in doing away with productive work by human hands. In fact, such work is becoming more and more rare, and it is becoming constantly more difficult to earn a living in this way: Less than one-sixth of the total labor force in modern industrial society is engaged in actual production. This is a tragic departure from the principle espoused by Thomas Aquinas, the great religious philosopher, in his claim that human beings possess both brains and hands and enjoy nothing more than to be creatively useful in activities involving both.

If centers for the performance of repair work could be established throughout the country, a great deal could be accomplished in the struggle against youth unemployment. The development of an intermediate technology built upon the constructive efforts of many people, including the young, might even help stop the encroachment of heavy technology, which reduces people to the role of commodities.

It can be argued that this type of development would slow the growth of productivity. I believe, however, that if we in Denmark were to concentrate on developing the quality of our products while conserving resources, it would be possible not only to sell these products abroad but also to meet the present need to change the course of social development. In this connection, the needs of developing countries are also relevant. There is undoubtedly too much emphasis on hard technology in the industrialized world; and economists in developing countries (who have received the same education as European specialists) perpetuate this overemphasis in their own countries. The result is that people have left the villages and migrated to the cities in the hope of finding work in industry, often in vain. In fact, unemployment in the developing world is catastrophically high, sometimes as high as 40 to 50 percent of the labor force. Thus, there is an obvious need to help villagers acquire various necessities, such as pumps for drinking water.

We must include this global thinking in our efforts to combat unemployment. Great interest could be aroused in providing opportunities for young skilled workers from industrial countries to go to developing countries and live in the villages—as many American Peace Corps volunteers have done—working among the people there and helping them develop intermediate technology. This, I believe, would not only benefit the people in the developing countries but would also stimulate the development of trade between developed and developing countries.

Educational Activities

The issue of productive centers for youths raises the issue of cooperation with employers and unions. Employers as well as labor organizations must be included in the planning process in order to avoid conflicts. If all parties keep open minds, reasonable solutions can no doubt be found. Common sense tells us that it is necessary to avoid a situation in which habits and patterns created under totally different conditions are still treated as totally valid.

Finally, it is important to point out that practical work must go hand in hand with education at these centers. In fact, the only way in which many young people and adults can acquire theoretical knowledge is when it is combined with practical work; and yet this idea has not been used to any great extent. What actually is called for is a new type of person. We must turn away from many of the traditions and habits that we have inherited. It is no longer entirely good to expand, exploit, and be dynamic and competitive in a material direction while neglecting dynamic efforts at human development. In the last analysis, it is a question of culture—of turning away from one-sided goals we have pursued and of seeking a balance in our national and international life—which thus far has not been found. The need for a revolution in our thinking goes far beyond the choices between new systems and systems that were established at a time when different conditions prevailed. No system can save us; only a change of attitudes will succeed.

In the efforts to combat youth unemployment, we have manifestations of all the trends in our society: the generation gap, problems of education, the question of alternative technology, and the questions of cooperation with developing countries, resources, pollution, economic growth, and so on. Youth unemployment is a common problem for all of us, and in devising ways to meet it we can develop in all of these areas.